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The Press Is Peculiar, by Henry R. Luce, on page 650

The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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A Chip on the Shoulder

NEW YORK last week was mildly titillated by one of those periodical rows over a visiting British novelist which recur as regularly as sunspots and presidential elections. The novelist, Mr. J. B. Priestley, author of two excellent novels in the Dickens tradition, and a critic of distinction, had long been known in England as an intelligent friend of American literature which he had reviewed with unusual discrimination in the English weeklies, but that did not get in the news. One can picture the scene—a foggy morning in the bay, ship reporters eager for a story, badinage and leading questions, and the unfortunate novelist led by the jolly humor of arrival into anecdotes and wisecracks which looked like sneering when printed under the familiar head "Englishman Patronizes America."

Now Englishmen do patronize the United States, though not so frequently as in pre-war days when there was still a subconscious belief that the Americans were Colonials, and so do Frenchmen, Germans, and Italians, and when they are that kind of homo deserve to be soundly spanked for their impudence. But spanking is all they need in any case, and in at least two-thirds of the remembered examples it is the reporters that should have the spanking. To paraphrase the old story, if an Englishman praises America it is not news, but if he says the skyline of New York is atrocious, it is good for a column. And Mr. Priestley's is not the first instance where the innocent guest found an opinion planted in his lips before the fog had lifted from the city.

* * *

What children we are in our sensitiveness to foreign estimates! For it is that one criticizes more than the reporters who are angling for what they know the public wants, and regard a senior in their craft as quite able to take care of himself. And what curious children to have retained through two centuries the mood of the real American Colonials who went into rages when it was reported that the Great Chan of English letters had said that all animals degenerated in America, including man! Jefferson had to send Buffon a skeleton of a New England moose to prove that four legged beasts at least grew great in our climate.

But Mr. Priestley, though he has been hardly used for his indiscretions, need not feel injured. It is a compliment we pay him, left-handed, but not without significance. These last surviving remnants of Colonialism do not tell all the story. There is another reason for our sensitiveness and a more honorable one. We are the most open-minded readers in the world, and upon us the world's literature descends (especially the English) and among us the world's literature (and especially the English) is more widely sold than elsewhere. It is awesome even to consider what would happen to British literary incomes, if this continent should sink like another Atlantis. And the fact that Americans through their reading are far more at home with the British imagination than the British with ours is a very real reason for our sensitiveness to English opinion. When, and if, French and German books circulate as widely as the English here, and when, and if, our culture approximates French and German culture as much as it does to English culture now, then let the visiting Academician (if Academicians ever visit any place but Paris) and the newly arrived Herr Doktor guard every word with the guileful smiling reporter or they too will go on the radio, as critics of our sacred country.

A last lingering remnant of Colonialism is responsible for the absurdities of our sensitiveness. But there is something to be said for the sensitiveness itself. Only self-centred, self-satisfied, or essentially provincial countries are indifferent to the opinions of their neighbors.

The Sirens

By EDWARD DAVISON

OTHERS when I am dead
On this hard bed
Where I lie now
Will slumber somehow.

And many a night awake
Toss till the dawn, and ache
At the heart as I
Ached in time gone by—

As I this night am aching,
Almost to heart-breaking!
Weakened, abandoned, lost,
Counting the extreme cost

Of whoring in one's youth
With the four sirens, Truth,
Poetry, Music, Nature,
Lovely in every feature.

They fill his house with want
Who loves them best, and plant
Forever in his breast
The tormentress of unrest.

They listen to his sighing,
Provoking, then denying;
He knows how lost his peace is
Who suffers their caprices.

When he is most neglected
They fall on him unexpected,
Take him alone and naked;
And so his thirst is slaked.

Yet in the end, deserted,
He sees them, broken-hearted,
Pursued by others younger
And knows them his no longer.

This Week

"Cosima Wagner."
Reviewed by CARL ENGEL.

"Axel's Castle."
Reviewed by MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

"Oklahoma Town."
Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL.

"According to Thomas."
Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS.

"Law and the Modern Mind."
Reviewed by THURMAN W. ARNOLD.

The Folder.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

Years of the Modern.
By H. M. TOMLINSON.

The God-Child of Fortune*

Reviewed by CARL ENGEL

ADULTERY is a personal matter. Its aspects vary with the circumstances. It can be sordid, it can be heroic. In either case it is apt to be held an offense against public morals so-called. When committed by persons in the public eye, their conduct is publicly discussed and generally condemned without the knowledge of whether the supposed infraction was the consequence of a wilful disregard for common decency or of a powerless submission to a higher necessity.

In the case of Cosima Liszt, wife of Hans von Bülow, her breaking of the marriage vows and her surrender to Richard Wagner were inevitable. More than that, they constitute her supreme claim to the unique position she attained in her lifetime and furnish an absorbing interest in the story of her life, published after her recent death at the age of ninety-three. Long as may be the list of notable adulteresses, no one more magnificent is to be found in history than Cosima.

In fact, up to the present she loomed a little too forbiddingly superb. Hers seemed to be too icy cold and cruel an abandonment of a good man for the sake of a great one; her casting off the weaker and preferring the stronger of the two had not the redeeming glamor of self-sacrifice. It rather smacked of designing selfishness. One could not help feeling that Cosima realized, perhaps calculated, the increases in her own reflected greatness by the step she took. To many of her contemporaries, surely, this thought must have provided a plausible motive for what, at best, was a bold defiance of convention.

Now Richard Count du Moulin-Eckart, in a biography approved by the House of Wahnfried, lifts the veil from the secret places of the heroine's heart as bared in her letters and diaries. And we behold, instead of an unscrupulous wanton, a conscience-stricken woman, infinitely greater for her frailty and wretchedness. The world has long since accepted the theory that without Cosima there might have been no "Meistersinger of Nuremberg," no termination of the "Nibelung," no "Parsifal." There would have always remained "Tristan," pinnacle of Wagner's creative work, largely created in the "asylum" offered to the homeless refugee by Otto Wesendonck, and largely helped by the indispensable "idyll" with Mathilde, Otto's wife. Those are happenings dating from B. C.—before Cosima. Yet Cosima, admittedly, gave Wagner his first real domestic happiness, tranquillity of surroundings, and a renewed zest for the joyful toil. She gave him all this and more, she gave him herself. But at a price.

Wagner's enemies in Munich were besmirching her name. Cosima and Richard were being dragged into political, social, and theatrical intrigues. King Ludwig, behind the defenses of his fairy castles, kept up his belief in the wonderful "Friend" until the ugly truth scaled the last ramparts and would no longer be denied. We are told that in the event the royal subvention had ceased, or had been forced to cease, Wagner "thought of a visit to America." If Wagner and Cosima, at that point, should have sought shelter in America, we might have had the edifying spectacle of their being refused admittance by the Immigration Office because of "moral turpitude"; for was not the composer Scriabin, when he visited New York, some twenty-five years ago with

* COSIMA WAGNER. By RICHARD COUNT DU MOULIN-ECKART. Translated from the German by CATHERINE ALISON PHILLIPS. New York: Alfred A Knopf. 2 vols. 1930.

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a companion not his wife, just able to pack his trunks and catch a boat the night before the authorities proposed suggesting to him the desirability of his departure from our moral shores?

When the second anniversary came round of the day on which Cosima had openly forsaken Hans von Bülow and permanently joined Richard Wagner, she wrote in her diary: "I recalled yesterday how I had arrived with my two children, trembling and scarcely able to speak another word. I had banged the door of the world behind me and parted from it forever." To be sure, her union with Bülow was far from ideal: he could be trying, and more than irritating. But he had qualities of heart and character. Cosima left a neurasthenic gentleman and eminent artist, in order to throw in her lot with a neurotic cad and incomparable genius.

On August 19, 1870, six days before her wedding with Wagner, she writes in her diary:

> Thirteen years ago today was my wedding [with Hans von Bülow], in just such rainy weather. I did not know what I was promising then; for I did not keep my promise; but I know what it was that swayed my feelings. Never shall I forget my sin, and I shall look it constantly in the face, in order to learn humility and resignation.

And on August 25 when—after endless delays and after having borne him three children out of wedlock—she became at last Richard's lawful wife, there is this entry:

> Our marriage took place at eight o'clock. May I prove worthy to bear Richard's name. My prayers have been concentrated upon two points: Richard's well-being and my hope that I may always be able to promote it, and Hans's happiness and my hope that it may be his lot to live a cheerful life afar from me.

If the point of "guilt" must be raised at all, it is Wagner's rather than Cosima's. He was ruthless in his egoism. He took what he wanted regardless of whose it was. When Bülow, in 1862, had sold a ring presented to him by the Grand Duke of Baden in order to contribute some money to Wagner's needs, Wagner wrote to Bülow:

> Whoever else still possesses any valuables that he does not care about must cheerfully sacrifice them to me—in all seriousness. As I am now, I have suddenly regained entire confidence that I shall win back and restore all the stuff splendidly and gloriously.

Could anything be more splendidly and gloriously sardonic?

In May, 1864, after having been "rescued" by King Ludwig and sumptuously installed in Munich, Wagner invited Bülow to come to him, alone at first, for all he needed at that time was a pianist of Bülow's ability and devotion to give the young King some idea of the Nibelung music. But immediately we see the amazing monster changing his plans and neatly preparing to bait his victim:

> I invite you, with your wife and children and maid-servant, to take up your quarters with me this summer for as long as possible—this is the result of long communing with myself. Hans, you find me in prosperity—my life is completely transformed! I am full of the most genuine love, the purest intentions—but my house is desolate, and now, for the first time, I feel this more painfully than ever. Good souls, now do help me over these first days. People my house! A whole story is ready for you and your dear family. Cosima shall come with the two children.

And she came.

* * *

Wagner was fifty-one; Cosima, twenty-seven. The difference in their ages was significant. It worried Liszt, it shocked Mrs. Grundy. Unquestionably, Cosima's charm and vivid mentality acted upon Wagner with a rejuvenating force, so that eventually he appeared younger than his years. But this rejuvenescence is carried a little too far by Count Du Moulin-Eckart when, in discussing Wagner's final animosity against Liszt, he makes the astounding statement: "It must not be forgotten that Liszt was many years older than the Master." Liszt was exactly nineteen months older than his son-in-law, or a little more than a year and a half. That statement is in keeping with certain tendencies of the author to throw a roseate light upon the darker sides of his heroes; and sometimes he can do so only by casting shadows upon certain others. Papa Liszt gets his share of umbrageous retouching. Princess Wittgenstein, of course, appears in hues of darkest black. Of Nietzsche branded as a thankless renegade, we are told that Wagner "had really been the first to initiate him into Schopenhauer and was in the fullest sense of the word his master." And again we read that "The Master" had "after all been his [Nietzsche's] teacher!"

It cannot be said that the author has treated his subject always with absolute impartiality. Perhaps that could not have been expected, considering his personal relations with the House of Wahnfried. But he has greatly helped us toward understanding two of the most remarkable personalities of the last century. The wealth of hitherto unpublished letters and of extracts from diaries is almost too abundant. The highfalutin correspondence that Cosima, on Wagner's behalf and in his interest, carried on with poor "Parzival," the royal dupe, is often a little sickening. Pages upon pages addressed to "the Only one" or "the Benevolent one," with circumstantial tales about "our distant Friend" or "the Dear one," make strange reading. Yet, of the effect upon the King when he found his idol but a human all-too-human, we are told too little. There are rents in the narrative, which are not always successfully patched.

The author paints Cosima as having been a "pious Catholic." It is doubtful whether religious scruples weighed heavily with her. She did not share the Catholic idea regarding divorce. In a letter of Cosima's to Baroness von Schleinitz, dating from the early part of 1883, we read,

> Unless husband and wife live in and for each other, even at the price of great sacrifices, marriage is a monstrosity—a hell, in fact—nay, one of the most horrible and sordid institutions ever devised . . . we certainly cannot be grateful enough to Luther for the possibility of putting an end to a state which is the most unworthy thing imaginable—for both parties, too—unless it is sublime in spite of all its sufferings.

Among unpublished letters of Wagner's in the Library of Congress in Washington are several addressed to the lawyer who conducted Cosima's divorce proceedings. In one of these letters Wagner frankly asks whether Cosima's joining of the Protestant Church is needed in order to facilitate the divorce or only to make possible the remarriage. The act was plainly one of convenience and had no other significance. In these same letters we catch glimpses of the infinite chivalry of Hans von Bülow, broken in spirit and health, but nobleman to the bitter end.

In 1877 Cosima wrote in her diary: "Guilt is the most terrible of evils. I accuse nothing and nobody, and I am conscious of the fearful, inexplicable guilt of my being born." The daughter of Liszt and the Countess d'Agoult, she grew up convinced "that she had neither father nor mother." Yet she was god child of Fortune. Brilliantly endowed, she moved all her life in an enchanted circle.

At Wagner's side, she was privileged to take part in the marvelous unfolding of his gigantic musical conceptions. She brought simplicity and tenderness forth—witness the "Siegfried Idyll"—where bombast often marred the beauty of utterance. After Wagner's death, her humility and resignation gave way to an increasing show of autocracy. She became Mistress of Bayreuth. She turned into a sort of Mary Baker Eddy of the Wagnerian cult, enthroned in the mother-church on the *Festspielhügel*. She lived to be a legend. In nothing is the legend seriously altered by Du Moulin-Eckart's account, except that after reading it we understand perhaps more clearly that Cosima's "guilt" became transfigured and glorified, because her glory was but the fruit of her unspeakable misery. She had humbled herself before the world, and she rose to one of its highest places.

A gift of $50,000 in memory of George Edward Woodberry has just been made by Harry Harkness Flagler of Millbrook, New York, to endow a Poetry Room in the Harvard Library. Here will be placed the books of the Morris Gray foundation, the books left to the Library by Mr. Woodberry himself, and the collection of Amy Lowell. Through this gift, the Poetry Room becomes a memorial not only to George Woodberry, but to his classmate Morris Gray and to Amy Lowell, the sister of a third classmate, President Lowell.

The fund will provide for a curator for these collections, and the rooms will be furnished in a manner which will encourage their use as a gathering place for those interested in poetry. In these rooms will be given each year the several talks by poets brought by the Morris Gray fund to speak to undergraduates.

A new monthly review "for the exposition of German, American, and British ideas" has just made its bow under the title of *The International Forum*. Published in Berlin, it is to be written throughout in English. Most of the articles in the first number are by Germans.

Essays on Modern Masters

AXEL'S CASTLE. By EDMUND WILSON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

THE distinction of Edmund Wilson's critical writing, at a period of low pressure in this field, resides in his skepticism, his candor, and his boldness. Where most other professional critics, in America, are content to remain journalists, timid or compromised through intangible connections with the literature-business, Wilson is a widely read, laborious, and willing adventurer in the forest of modern art. Here, amid these shadows, the others may remain ignorant or bewildered, conceiving or relating nothing to any recognizable suite of ideas—or simply grow humoristic, like Mencken; Wilson attacks his chosen modern material with intelligence and with high energy, scrutinizing the product, demanding of it insistently, almost clamorously, what is its meaning and what is its intention. For Wilson is an intensely logical fellow, logical almost to the point of being hard-headed. Actually his spirit, his method, would seem hostile to the rather evasive literary types accosted in "Axel's Castle"; Mallarmé, Yeats, Joyce, Valéry, Gertrude Stein are not easily wooed by such bright, rational tactics, and they seem to shrink a little into their character of mystification. On the other hand, the very earnestness of his manners throws these figures partly under a strong, hard light in which it is sometimes useful to see them.

These essays on the modern masters, which were read with much interest in the pages of the *New Republic*, and which are designed to be a preface to modern literature, have been unified by a central thesis: that this literature has been living for a long time in the enchanted palace of Symbolism,—the "Axel's Castle" of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam—where the atmosphere was charged with Wagner's allegorical music-dramas, where figures and shapes were always received in a subjectively altered sensorium, and held to the mysterious "correspondences" which Baudelaire accorded to them; where literature sought to be "pure" and architectural, while music tried to be literary, and painting tried to be musical! A period of a wonderful, subjective obscurity in art, a period of approach, as Valéry interprets it, to the "too pure zones" where the air breathed was unbreathable. In this enchanted castle the artist took refuge because he was essentially romantic, and wounded by the bourgeois ugliness of nineteenth century life. Thus for the poets, for Rimbaud as for Mallarmé, literature must be suggestive or symbolic, rather than "representative"; words, a medium of imaginative and intuitive commerce, rather than a currency of the general convenience. And to read them we must make sacrifices, yield ourselves to their autonomy.

* * *

The contemporary masters whom Wilson speaks of have the same earmarks and in their exactions differ little from the nineteenth century Symbolists. By tracing the origin and development of the later men, by relating them definitely to the earlier movements, Wilson has cleared the air a great deal. (I wonder why this was not done sooner; but it is still true that it takes the hardest thinking to perceive the simplest affinities.) So that when we read Joyce's "Anna Livia Pluribelle," in which the great craftsman lectures to himself in a corner and in his own personal language, we recall Rimbaud's "Sonnet on the Vowels," or Mallarmé's "Afternoon of a Faun," with the realization that Joyce still dwells in the enchantment of Symbolism. Even the youngest literary "schools" of Paris admittedly owe the inspiration for their occasional good writing to Villiers and Marcel Schwob, to Rimbaud and Lautréamont.

Modern artists still dwell, or have, up to recently, in "Axel's Castle"; and it is Edmund Wilson's conclusion *that they should all issue from it at last*. Too long they have retreated from the real world into isolation, "while pandemonium raged without." What they should return to—from so much subtlety, refinement, disillusionment, and weariness, in a shuttered house, and ill-ventilated—is to such universal moral questions as whether: "it is possible to make a practical success of human society; whether, if we continue to fail, a few masterpieces however profound or noble will be able to make life worth living for the few people in a position to enjoy them." For writers unable to interest themselves in our contemporary society, either by a scientific view of it, or by attempting to reform or satirize it:

> There are . . . only two alternative courses to follow—

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Axel's or Rimbaud's. If one chooses the first of these, the way of Axel, one shuts oneself up in one's private world, cultivating one's private fantasies, encouraging one's private manias, ultimately preferring one's absurdest chimeras to the most astonishing realities, ultimately mistaking one's chimeras for realities. If one chooses the second, the way of Rimbaud, one tries to leave the twentieth century behind —to find the good life in some country where modern manufacturing methods and modern democratic institutions do not present problems to the artist because they haven't yet arrived.

For who can surpass Proust and Valéry, in whose hands literature has become an elaborate "game" which leads us to the escape of an interior life rather than to a life of extraversion and social responsibility? Here Wilson has been tremendously logical; and I accept his severe conclusion. But at this point I should like to pause and consider if his judgment of the "game" is adequate, whether, in short, he has the right to condemn sinfulness through having known temptation.

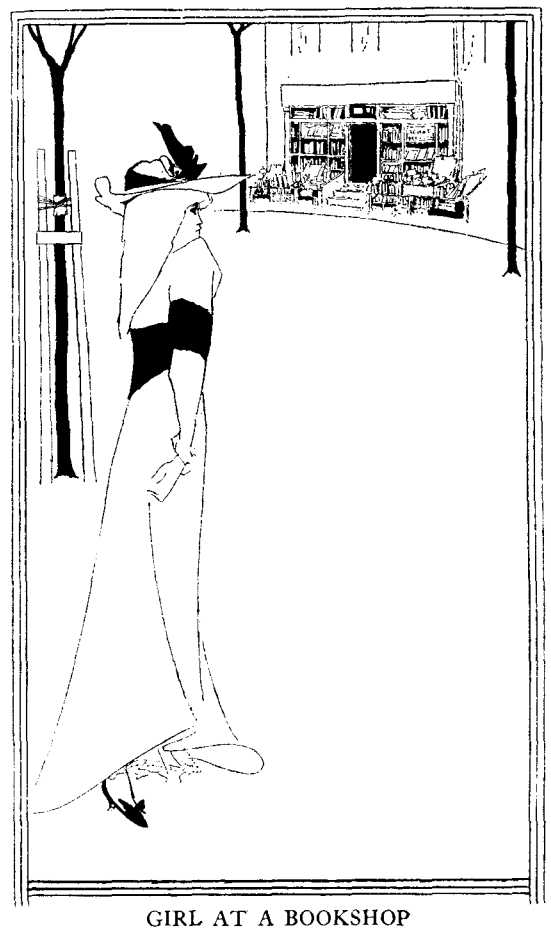
The pattern of Wilson's reasoning, the outlining of the problem, is convincing; but in integrating the individual cases studied within his pattern he seems less so. For the specific measurement and appraisal of such work as Paul Valéry's, Eliot's, Gertrude Stein's, he shows a temperamental deficiency, a want of sensitiveness to the question of how things are done, to technical accomplishment, brilliance, and variation. Often literary phenomena, like life itself, evade such Hegelian classifications as he hastens towards. And as Edmund Wilson pleads with us to abandon utterly a "dying tradition" of belles lettres, we wonder if he has tasted the full value of this tradition, the full power of consolation in it, so much like morphine, of course. We wonder if we need really abandon any decent tradition, and if the greatest good does not consist in carrying it on in some altered form. To measure fully the literature of the Symbolist tradition one must have, besides the power of reason, a sensitive ear, and trained, instinctive associations. Had Wilson more of these traits he would perhaps discern more quickly the poverty of Yeats, whom he admires at great length; or he would extract from the difficult, sometimes tedious, Gertrude Stein, those passages, as in "Tender Buttons," which display the success of her experiments, as well as those which point to their tediousness; or he would be ready to perceive, to admit that Eliot's later, religious poetry is not a whit less lovely than that of the earlier period, although one disliked his theology. The profounder reverberations of Paul Valéry's "Teste," of which he is so easily skeptical, would not have escaped him; nor the suggestions of a serene classicism in Valéry's poems, deriving from La Fontaine and Racine, as well as those of a romance-tainted Symbolism. In saying "good-bye to all that," I feel that Edmund Wilson is being extremely honest and eminently rational; but I believe, first, that he is not aware in the fullest degree of the sensuous complexity of the modern tradition, and second, that he is temperamentally unsympathetic to it. Finally, he should make it very clear whether he expects us all, henceforth, to write like H. G. Wells?

There are divers ways of social awareness: both La Fontaine and Racine, in the time of Louis the Great, were ill-adjusted men; yet their work had great positive implications. There is "impure" literature, on the other hand, in the form even of social tracts, which has won immortality through great eloquence and truth; and one thinks surely the present period is ripe for such efforts again. But can any one say that the force of pure literature, through implication and example, rather than direct entreaty, has been the less potent?

Is Edmund Wilson to abandon the too "specialized" field of literary criticism, in view of the collectivist tendency of his conclusions? One hopes not. Sharing his collectivism, we may think of other alternatives still. Perhaps Wilson should abandon the evasive modern literary types of whom he has been writing with so little compassion, and consider the thousand and one other types of the past and present, especially those who would mirror his own temper, convictions, enthusiasms. One thinks at once of how large and broad the medium of criticism has been in the hands of a man like Sainte-Beuve, so that the whole spectacle of human culture, with its writers, painters, great ladies, knaves, philosophers, statesmen seems to pass through the screen of his mind—not always correctly evaluated, yet breeding in turn a literature that is eternally delightful, informative, rational, alive.

In my anxiety to take up the extremely important issues which Wilson raises I have reflected the highly stimulating quality of "Axel's Castle," but perhaps have failed to register my impression that it contains the richest essays in criticism done here in many years.

In short, the essayist does not invent an ideal mood but expresses the mood he has. "Enough to say that the writer is one who, having watched for a considerable period the usual things of life, tragic, pleasurable, and commonplace—deaths of old friends—changes of public opinion—old terms, new notions and all the rest—has acquired a courage, or at least a recklessness, which emboldens him to say somewhat of what he feels about them." The result is a series of papers notable for their demure wit, their range of interests, their frequent illumination of modern fetishes and tendencies, and their basic honesty. They offer much for readers who like to use mind and fancy in good company.



GIRL AT A BOOKSHOP
From a drawing by Max Beerbohm

Life in a Small Town

OKLAHOMA TOWN. By GEORGE MILBURN. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by STANLEY VESTAL

THIS unusual volume contains thirty-six short stories or sketches of life in a small town in Oklahoma, stories which have appeared in such periodicals as *Folk-Say*, *Vanity Fair*, and the *American Mercury*. It has the rare merit among such collections that the book is even more readable than the separate stories were in the magazines. These yarns belong together: they form a kind of prose "Spoon River Anthology." Yet to one who knows something of small-town life in Oklahoma, Milburn's book seems a sounder piece of work than that of Masters. It does not skyrocket away, or fly off the handle. It keeps the eye on the object.

The small town has been treated so variously by American writers that it is hard to imagine a fresh attack. Yet here, I think, we find it. For Milburn knows his materials, and—in the sense of an artist—loves them. Yet he is detached, he holds no brief for anything or anybody. He is no Babbitt turned satirist, like Sinclair Lewis; no Jim Tully ballyhooing for vulgarity. His book is not the artily cynical book of a refugee intellectual. Milburn is too robust for that, having lived the life of a hobo himself. Nor is Milburn a "highbrow" studying an alien *milieu*. For that we may be thankful: heaven knows we have had enough of that sort of thing.

George Milburn grew up in a small town, and he knows its folk-lore so well that the book itself is folk-lore. Many of the incidents are taken from the popular stores of village history and legend, and will be recognized with delight by all who know well the small town of the Middle West.

Every type of the village appears in these pages, droll, comic, foolish, vain, brutal, or cruel. The Banker, the Deputy Sheriff, the Farmer, the Barber, the Photographer, the Holy Rollers and the Ku Klux Klan, the Nigger and the Indian, the Preacher and the Sinner, and the village Flaming Youth. This is rich matter, and it is handled richly. Milburn is well aware that art is not life, and that even exaggeration is a comment upon the facts. Here is plenty. Here is laughter. And here is no monotony. This is a book obviously written with thorough enjoyment.

A Scriptural Novel

ACCORDING TO THOMAS. By IVAN NAZHIVIN. New York: Harper & Bros. 1931. $3.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

IT is a bold author who begins his book with the confession that Leo Tolstoy advised him not to write it; a still bolder one who offers a Scriptural novel to the American public, which sated its appetite for Scriptural novels with "Ben-Hur." However, Mr. Nazhivin obviously wrote "According to Thomas" for his own satisfaction. As a biography of Jesus he has good reason to be satisfied with it; he writes as a historian, thorough, judicious, plausible. And precisely where he succeeds as a historian he falls short as a novelist.

This is the gospel as it might have been written by doubting Thomas, who though he doubted followed Jesus because "He is good, he is simple, and it is comforting to be near him. . . . And then one is always thinking, perhaps everything will really get better as he promises." Thomas, in the story, finally burns the life of Jesus which he had commenced as a corrective to the distorted thaumaturgy of Matthew, thinking that before long the whole thing would be forgotten anyway. As Nazhivin presents it, this history of a minor Hebrew prophet might well have been forgotten. That it was not forgotten was the doing of Peter, and still more of Paul, with whom Nazhivin is not greatly concerned. The disappointment and failure of an impractical idealist happened to be the more or less irrelevant prelude to one of the great movements of human history. In itself it is faithfully and at times poignantly recounted; but its relation to greater events must be supplied by the reader. There is less history but better showmanship in the gospels.

However, a historical novelist ought to be, within reason, faithful to history; and here Nazhivin comes off very well, in so far as anyone can say what is faithful to history in the most disputed of all historical episodes. "The more I read historical works and sources," he confesses, "the less did I find myself able, without preconceived notions, to get closer to the historical facts." So others have found; the tangled and contradictory narratives of the gospels pretty successfully defy a critical reconstruction, unless you have preconceived notions to help you out. So the man who sets out to decide for himself what Jesus really said usually ends by finding that Jesus said what he would have said if he had been Jesus; whoever sets out to discover what Jesus was really like ends by looking in a magnifying mirror. Jesus was like Tolstoy, like Bruce Barton, like Bishop Manning.

* * *

Tolstoy, at least, seems to have realized this; advising in 1903 against the writing of the book he said, "I not only do not want new details about the life of Christ to be brought to light, but I should even like to put aside what is already known." Quite so. Questing faith finds facts a stumbling block, though it can usually manage to leap over them; and the critical student, discarding faith, finds equally formidable obstacles in traditions which may not be facts, but which come with as good credentials as the facts he finds acceptable.

Now it seems to an amateur student of the Scriptures that Nazhivin has succeeded very well with a harmony of the more credible parts of the gospels. He explains some of the miracles, finds a seed of later exaggerated fact in others, and dismisses most of them as sheer fantasy. Miracles, however, do not matter; personality does. Nazhivin's Jesus is a quite plausible first century Hebrew teacher—highly emotional, devoid of logic, overflowing at times in rhapsodies more poetic than coherent which his followers insisted on taking literally. In an age seething with revolutionary agitation he was indifferent to projects for social reform; he felt keenly the suffering all about him, but he expected somehow the end of the age, he insisted that "the kingdom of God is within you."

Whoever approaches the record as a historian rather than a theological polemist (whether Christian, Marxian, or atheist) is likely to feel that this is Jesus, if not as he was—we may never know that—at least as he might have been; neither a Socialist agitator, nor a half-crazed neurotic, nor a Theosophist Mahatma, but a figure very much of his place and time, if somewhat purer in life and more powerful in personality than a score of contemporary religious teachers. But its very historical plausibility makes it poor

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show stuff—and a novel must be show stuff in some degree.

Indeed, Nazhivin convinces this reviewer that a truly historical novel centering around Jesus cannot be written; the better the history the worse for the novel. For we all know the end of this story. We all know there can be no conventional love interest, however much may be made of the thwarted passions of Mary Magdalene and Mary the sister of Martha —with regard to which, Mr. Nazhivin displays a commendable moderation. We know what the principal characters must do, however their motives may be restudied. The rehabilitation of Pilate has been pretty thoroughly accomplished; Nazhivin goes farther and rehabilitates Caiaphas—though to do it he has to transfer the best known of his recorded sayings to another man. As for Judas, he is not the disappointed Jewish patriot that certain authors have painted, but a man worn down by incessant poverty till at last he snaps under the strain. "He was a good man," said Thomas. "We sell our conscience ten times a day and it is nothing to us—we go on living. But he sold it only once, and he hanged himself." But this Judas lacks the obvious dramatic effect of the disappointed patriot; more plausible, perhaps, but not without loss can you take drama out of the most famous drama in history.

Two other figures make occasional brief appearances without doing anything for the story—Saul of Tarsus, and the soldier Pantherus, whom Jewish legend made the real father of Jesus. Nazhivin vaguely represents Jesus as illegitimate, but Pantherus is never related to the story at all. Perhaps the expurgator has intervened here; but better leave Pantherus out altogether than to make his presence of no account. Still more with Saul. In the story, he is the vindictive legalist which the Saul of that period doubtless was. But if you are going to bring him into a novel about Jesus, he must be announced, or at least adumbrated, as the Siegfried who will some day reforge the shattered sword.

For the mainspring of his plot Nazhivin relies on the "Christian interpolation" in Josephus—lately, though somewhat dubiously, supported by the discovery of an ancient Slavonic manuscript—and some scraps of secondary evidence. From these he weaves this story: A revolutionary rising has been planned by Barabbas, with the aid of the two thieves later crucified on Calvary, for which Jesus—well known, and popular with the people for his denunciations of the rich and his vague prophecies of an imminent transformation of all things—was to serve as the innocent figurehead. Entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, Jesus was greeted by a crowd which hailed him as the Son of David, the expected Messiah—and while he was realizing "the utter and final collapse of his dream, of his whole life," the revolt broke out and was almost instantly suppressed.

So it might have been. But what happened between that Sunday and the Thursday night when Jesus, the nominal head of the rebels, was arrested? In the story, very little; he stayed in Gethsemane, keeping out of the way of the police. So again it might have been, almost certainly would have been, in history; even the unwilling chief of a rebellion that had failed would hide out—unless of course he ran away, which the historical tradition forbids. But this is a novel; and in the four critical days between crisis and catastrophe, while all the minor characters are busy, the central figure does nothing.

Nazhivin, setting out to write a novel, has here written plausible history to the fatal injury of artistic effect. St. Matthew, or whoever wrote the gospel that bears his name, professes to write history. As a historian of the last week in the life of Jesus he is absurd; what rural prophet so received at the gate of Jerusalem would have been allowed to go about for days uttering gloomy predictions and making seditious attacks on the ruling classes? But the mounting dramatic power of Matthew's last eight chapters produces an effect that the greatest of novelists might envy. Matthew and Thomas might have changed places, if not to the greater glory of God, at least to the greater benefit of man.

Erratum

By a regrettable oversight the review by Dorothy Canfield Fisher of Marshall McClintock's "We Take to Bed," which appeared in last weeks' issue of the *Saturday Review*, was attributed to the wrong publisher. The book is issued by Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith.

Law and Men

LAW AND THE MODERN MIND. By JEROME FRANK. New York: Brentano's. 1930. $4.

Reviewed by THURMAN W. ARNOLD
Yale University School of Law

WE are, or claim to be, a free people. We govern ourselves. And this means that we refuse to bow to the arbitrary will of individuals, because that is a surrender of our dignity, an insult to our sense of importance. We can without loss of self-esteem, respect and obey the self-imposed restraints which a free people see fit to impose upon themselves. We can permit individuals to enforce those restraints. But we must always pretend that it is the rules, and not the individuals that we are obeying, to the end that this shall be a government of laws and not of men.

The results of this reverent attitude toward an unapproachable ideal are hard to appraise. But it is not difficult to see that it works differently in different times and under different circumstances. It has been used to escape from the tyranny of English kings. It may also be used as a divine sanction for the tyranny of the majority. It can be appealed to by those who urge subservience to any so-called law, however distasteful. It can be used with equal force by those who revolt against such a law because after all that kind of law is made by men, and violates the eternal science of the formal logic underlying all law. Is this attitude useful or significant today? Does it have the same place in our scheme of things and offer the same kind of protection to the individual which it did one hundred years ago? Just what effect does the ideal of the law as a seamless logical web, a system of wheels within wheels, a formal science, related to what the courts do in the same way that the science of mathematics is related to bridge building, have on the ordinary litigant or criminal before the bar? Does the fixed and reverent gaze of courts upon this lovely star, help or hinder them in the performance of their everyday duties? What is the effect of law, upon the modern mind?

* * *

Jerome Frank's book examines this problem from the point of view of a successful practicing lawyer for the benefit of practicing laymen and intelligent lawyers. It is an attack upon the strongly intrenched positions of the highly respectable priesthood of the law, brilliant, swift, sure, not always fair, but with the supreme merit of being intelligible to those not versed in the learned jargon of either the psychologist or the legal philosopher. It provides a set of convenient pigeonholes into which modern legal writers are placed for examination. The significance of their attitudes in relation to modern contested litigation is discussed. The march of the chapter headings indicates the method of the author's attack as he moves from one advanced position to another. For example, The Basic Myth; A Partial Explanation; The Language of the Law; Lawyers as a Profession of Rationalizers; Judicial Law Making; Legal Realism; Beale and Legal Fundamentalism; Verbalism and Scholasticism; Childish Thought, Ways, etc. The heavy artillery used is borrowed from the psychologist.

Why this constant search for certain rules to afford predictability of judicial decision in a changing of rules? Because most of us have never grown up. The child regards his parent as a final source of authority. When his parent fails him, he feels the necessity of finding that authority somewhere. The lack of or sudden withdrawal of support terrorizes him. He finds comfort in believing that somewhere that support and that certainty exist. In the church he finds it in the creed, which he never quite understands, but which is elastic to cover everything. In the law he finds it in that supposed formal science sometimes called law in discourse, sometimes "the common law," sometimes "a brooding omnipresence in the skies." The search for certainty then is a response to unconscious childish desires. It is not a science of applied logic to a complex situation, but a ritual for priests to conjure with. This ritual constantly gets in our way. The ninety-nine cases which do not deviate substantially from previous decisions will be decided without any reasoning process whatever. Most of them will not even get into court, hardly any will reach that threshold of judicial utterance, the appellate court. But the twenty-five thousand cases a year about which lawyers differ sufficiently so that they have to be decided by appellate courts will only be confused by compelling courts to express themselves in terms of a pretended logical science as foreign to the real issues as the science of astrology or palmistry. We must therefore rid ourselves of this childish obsession. A new technique of expression must be developed which will enable courts to talk about the problems before them for decision in terms of those problems, and not in the language of an abstract science existing independently of the social question it is supposed to solve. Until we have done that we will not have reached the stage of adult thinking.

* * *

Is this psychology superficial and mechanical? Many will claim that it is, but in doing so we suspect they will not realize the purpose of this book, or the niche that it may fill in our legal literature. He who is seeking the ear of the ordinary lawyer and judge, must avoid the intricacies of modern psychology for the very evident reason that only those psychologists who agree with one another can understand one another. The only sound statement which will be admitted by all psychologists today is to the effect that human life is very complicated in a changing world. And even that will be dismissed with an empty epigram by all profound thinkers unless it is expressed in such a complicated way that no one will quite realize its import. The psychology of this book must be regarded as a weapon of attack upon a cumbersome set of judicial inhibitions, not an instrument of precision. It is a beautiful figure of speech, useful and intelligible to the ordinary man. Anyone can think back to the time when his father was the law, to the time when a very simple religion satisfied, and call that state childish compared with his present frame of mind when he realizes that everything can be uncertain and yet he is freer and more effective because of the realization of that uncertainty. Is this train of thought scientific? Perhaps not, but there is that magic in it which may lead to the casting off of dead concepts. A chisel is a better tool for breaking fetters than a keen-edged razor.

If anyone doubts the effectiveness of this book, let him read Mr. Adler's criticism in the January issue of the *Columbia Law Review*, and note the bitterness of his defense of ancient citadels. Huge words are hurled like custard pies. The center of the trouble with Mr. Frank and the writers like him appears to be "their philosophical incompetence and naiveté and the uncritical transference of their authoritarian habits of thought from a field in which they are skilled in manipulating authorities to one in which they are unable to recognize the partisan lines formed by a plurality of competing theories." Which means, we suppose, that Mr. Frank is entirely too much interested in what happens to litigants in our courts of justice to be a competent critic of law in the abstract. Curious, indeed, is the frame of mind that calls this a weakness.

* * *

And in the meantime, almost coincidently with the publication of this book, appears a typical case which shows what can be done with the ancient formal science of the law, when a skilled and conservative court is put upon its mettle. In West Virginia a conviction for the larcency of $3,500 was reversed because the money was not described. A statute provided that no case should be reversed for any defect in the indictment which did not go to the "very right of the case." But this went to the very right of the case because you could not tell whether it was Mexican money or bills of exchange. The case is typical of hundreds. Does the ancient attitude of the seeker after a formal science of law induce such results, or was the court merely perverse and obstinate?

The Saturday Review
of LITERATURE

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The Bowling Green

The Folder

A GREAT deal of material has ben collecting in The Folder. Mr. W. S. Hall (of William Edwin Rudge's staff) thinks it is a pity that the Bowling Green has not in several years used its old typographical gadget of the pointing hand, like this ☞ Mr. Hall seemed to believe it was original with the Green; but no, we borrowed it from Ed. Howe's Monthly of which we were once a faithful reader ☞ Mr. Hall, by the way, was unanimously chosen as secretary-ad-lib of the recently organized *Grillparzer Gesellschaft*, a society which believes that the lively Viennese dramatist is insufficiently remembered. ☞ There are at present only 6 members of the *Grillparzer Gesellschaft* (Arnold Genthe was nominated honorary president) but it is believed that by 1932, when the 60th anniversary of G's death will be commemorated, the number will have grown. ☞ The pleasantest reading encountered lately was S. C. Roberts: *Doctor Watson*, one of Faber and Faber's Criterion Miscellany pamphlets (one shilling in London.) Mr. Roberts, distinguished Johnsonian, offers a biographical reconstruction of Sherlock Holmes's friend and attempts to resolve the famous problem of Dr. Watson's marriages. A delightful bit of serio-spoof, a Must item for all Holmesians. ☞ The first Mrs. Watson (née Mary Morstan, you remember) died during the period between 1891 and 1894 while Holmes was supposed to be dead in Reichenbach gorge. But Holmes himself, in the story of the *Blanched Soldier*, speaks of another Mrs. Watson existing in 1903. ☞ Mr. Roberts has carefully studied all the clues and offers the ingenious suggestion that the Deutero-Mrs. Watson was the cool and aristocratic (but also imprudent) Miss Violet de Merville of the story *The Illustrious Client*. Mr. Roberts says:—

> Watson's second marriage took place at the end of 1902 or at the beginning of 1903, a few months after the affair of the Illustrious Client. Now this adventure must have made a more than ordinary impression upon Watson's mind. Instinctively chivalrous, he was a man to whom a woman in trouble made a specially vivid appeal. Violet de Merville, moreover, was "beautiful, accomplished, a wonder-woman in every way." After the terrible exposure of the true character of her fiancé, what more natural than that Watson should, after a fitting interval, make inquiries as to her recovery of health and spirits? It may be objected that Miss de Merville moved in exalted circles, and that a retired practitioner would not have the *droit d'entrée* to her society. But here a significant fact must be considered. Miss de Merville's father was a soldier, and a soldier who had won distinction in Afghanistan—"de Merville of Khyber fame." With such a father-in-law Watson would at once be on common ground.

☞ Mr. Roberts goes on to the specially ingenious suggestion that the story (*The Mararine Stone*) which follows the first allusion to Watson's second marriage may be from the hand of Mrs. Watson II. It is not told by Dr. Watson himself, and it may well be that in the preoccupation of resuming medical practise, the good doctor turned over to this accomplished lady the task of editing one of the memoirs. ☞ The objections to Mr. Roberts' theory are grave, however. In the first place we nowhere learn, in the story of the *Illustrious Client*, that Dr. Watson actually met Miss de Merville; Holmes speaks of it as a possibility ("Perhaps you may meet her before we are through"), but Watson himself makes no comment. It was about the 14th of September 1902 when the horrid episode of Baron Gruner and the vitriol took place. ☞ After so serious a shock it would have taken Miss de Merville sometime to recover. We know that she was fond of Mediterranean cruising; I think it most probable that she would have gone for a winter voyage to recuperate; and it is improbable that she could have already become Mrs. Watson by January 1903. ☞ The other possible candidate for Dr. Watson's hand would be Kitty Winter; she was imprisoned for vitriol-throwing but given "the lowest possible sentence." On the whole I fear that Mr. Roberts' theory, though very tempting, is difficult to accept. ☞ But his essay, together with that of Father Ronald Knox in *Studies in Satire*, is a necessary addition to the Holmes-Watson codex.

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☞ Speaking of criminology, we have gone back to our old favorite Bataille: *Causes Criminelles et Mondaines*, and hope shortly to offer our patrons some gleanings from that rich field ☞ Mr. Don Marquis, hard at work in Hollywood, unbends his mind on writing sonnets. He says "If you like my sonnets shall give you oodles of same, at price of 1 yrs. subscription per sonnet. 104 snts in 2 yrs., making a series, giving me 104 yrs. of the *Saturday Review* thus assuring comparative immortality to both. If you get an idea you want a sonnet written about just put the idea on the wire; you will get completed snt by air mail inside the 3 days." ☞ Not enough explorers know the charms of old Bible House at 45 Fourth Avenue, New York: the March Sale of the romantic Argosy Book Store (everything at 25% off) might be a good pretext. In the latest Argosy catalogue we see listed a copy of Bob Burdette's *Rise and Fall of the Mustache* (1877) ☞ Which reminds us that Aaron Mendoza, the sentimentalist of 15 Ann Street, is compiling a bibliography of American Humor 1830-1880, and welcomes suggestions about little-known items. ☞ For rising and falling mustaches, Peter Mulligan, well-known in the Book Trade, has taken over the old Scranton Chop House at 207 West 48 ("28 seconds West of Broadway") and has renamed it Mulligan's Kitchen. He is fitting up a room in the basement with Literary Associations. ☞ Senate Bill Int. 86 Pr. 86 seeks to amend the Penal Law by inserting a new section on Mixing Babies in hospitals. The bill reads "The practise of mixing babies in hospital is hereby prohibited. . . . If in the course of any exchange of babies the original sex or color of the baby is changed, the hospital authorities shall be subject to double the penalty." ☞ The New York County Lawyers' Association (in their handsome new building on Vesey Street) are greatly disturbed at the lack of precision of the legislators' language. ☞ In the field of serious reading the most captivating book lately is Lowes Dickinson's Platonic dialogue *After 2000 years*.

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☞ Joseph Conrad always disliked being referred to as exclusively a writer of the sea. In a letter (to a French translator) sold lately at the American Art Association he wrote "Ils veulent m'exiler au millieu de l'océan. C'est flatteur. Ils n'ont fait cela qu'a Napoléon! Je viens de finir un roman ou il n'y a pas une goutte d'eau—excepté de la pluie." He was referring the *The Secret Agent*. ☞ The sevival of interest in John Donne, first predicted in the Bowling Green some ten years ago (Advt.) goes on excellently. Elliott Macrae of Dutton's writes that the Poems are to be issued this year in the Everyman Series. ☞ Dr. Donne, who had a strong flair for physique, would have been pleased by Earl Carroll's calendar, called *Earl Carroll's Year of Beauty* illustrated with portraits of a dozen fair ones by Haskell Coffin. ☞ Some unknown rhapsodist has contributed lively prose fancies describing Mr. Carroll's zodiac of formality ☞ of Ida Michael he writes "Carved in living marble to calm the restless pulse of man" ☞ of Betty Sundmark: "Impeccable! Impassioned! Impenetrable! Her eyes, like smouldering meteors, a magic mixture of doubt and belief. Her bosom a tomb for tired orchids" ☞ of Constance Trevor: "An imperial peacock on the Road to Paradise" ☞ of Beryl Wallace: "A Vital, Volcanic Venus! Eighteen until the 29th of September. A Magnificent Gesture of the Mysterious Sculptor" ☞ of Irene Ahlberg. "All in all, the splendor of graceful geometry." ☞ Turning to quite different themes, we are pleased to know that Hamish Miles, a Scottish laird who was once assistant gardener of this turf, has written a *Life of Benjamin Jowett*, ☞ Gerald Gould, in London's vigorous *Week-end Review*, has written the best essay ever published on Ginger Beer. His comment on that modest tipple, esteemed by men of feeling, can be taken as a symbolism of some unpretentious merits in literature: "a liquor of substance: it had body and bouquet: the sugar in it had been kept down to a decent minimum, and the heat was active without excess."

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☞ To our great surprise, we discovered a lurking vintner in the Fifties who could supply a bottle of a favorite cordial which we had never before been able to find in America—*Cordial-Médoc*. Of this placable digestive the distiller, M. Jourde of Bordeaux, writes good prose: "Son arome fin et délicat, la suavité et le moelleux de son goût, sont les moindres titres qu'elle puisse invoquer. Alliée à des fruits exquis et à des eaux-de-vie de choix special, cette liqueur emprunte à tous ces éléments leurs éminentes proprietés stomachiques. Son usage constant n'est pas irritant; ce n'est pas une panacée universelle mais c'est le Cordial par excellence." ☞ We were much interested in a mysterious little circular bearing the name of Pojodag House, 118 East 76 Street, New York. It says:—"In the rich medley of New York an important metaphysical experiment is being carried on, and is already demonstrating incalculable human values. . . .Indefatigable penetration into the deeps of the transliminal self unavoidably compels this experiment to take a metaphysical platform. It now rests on the frank recognition of the continuity of life and the claim that this phase of life is training for another. . . . He who desires to know the nature of man without the limitation of theory, cult, or creed may find what he seeks here." ☞ The happiest treasure that we ourself have added to our shelves this winter is *The New Testament in Braid Scots*, rendered by Rev. William Wye Smith; Paisley, 1901. ☞ And the most startling personal adventure was seeing the actual letter written by Melville to Mrs. Hawthorne admitting that much of the allegory of *Moby Dick* was not realized by Melville himself until the Hawthornes pointed it out. ☞ This letter will remain one of the most interesting treasures of American literature.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

A Professor at Home

THE TENDER REALIST AND OTHER ESSAYS. By L. WARDLAW MILES. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON

THIS is a pleasant example of a kind of writing still extant despite all the pepping up in academic quarters. The author is a bit gingerly with his learning; if the professors have a fault nowadays it is their over-anxiety to avoid the erudite graces. They should reflect that no real harm is done by the presence of a few gentlemen and scholars in the background. Moreover, nobody takes them for laymen even when they seek disguise by turning their gowns inside out, or wearing their caps at a rakish angle. Mr. Miles happens to be a professor but writes to please himself. He can afford to be leisurely, to ruminate, to digress, to loaf and invite his pen. In short, he has the quality most remote from syndicated vulgarism, with its obligatory punch, punch—all in the presence of the passenjare!

If these essays have unity it is in their good-humored challenge of present tendencies and conventions. The things written about are, the author owns, "usual things"; sleep, glory, sentimentality, fashion, war. The disadvantage of choosing such themes, he concedes, is that "all the good remarks have generally been made. . . . On the other hand, the advantage of the usual subject is that it remains a subject, while the unusual subject is apt to turn into nothing and vanish carrying its generalizations with it."

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The "tender realism" postulated as his prevailing mood is, he believes, common in an age that has undergone "spiritual dismemberment without loss of consciousness." It is the mood of the modern who finds himself homeless between the camps of belief and skepticism, who is endowed "patiently and passionately to serve a cause greater than oneself, but not finding it can serve the cause of self with but fitful and hammered energies. . . . To be condemned to live as such a lonely Ishmaelite is not only strange, it is also sometimes tragic." But it is not this skeptic's way to be somber and solemn—his safety lies in a vein of ironic and urbane inquiry. The tone is not always evenly maintained, now and then the writer slips into flippancy, and is aware of it. But these are familiar essays, not discourses or homilies, and a man has a right to be free-and-easy in a session with his own soul.

The book, it must be owned, has no plain robustious fare to offer the wistful reader, the fellow-Ishmaelite of this modern world. It ponders and questions with a "wry smile," like the hero or heroine of any current novel, and its only conclusion is acceptance. In short, the essayist does not invent an ideal mood but expresses the mood he has. The result is a series of papers notable for their demure wit, their range of interests, their frequent illumination of modern fetishes and tendencies, and their basic honesty. They offer much for readers who like to use mind and fancy in good company.

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The Press is Peculiar

MAN has, I believe, taken a greater amount of minerals out of his earth in the last thirty years than in all the ages prior to 1900. With almost equal assurance we may hazard the guess that more printing and paper has been consumed during the last thirty years than in all previous centuries. Almost all of this printing may be classed as journalism. Two of the biggest single pieces of printing are the annual Sears Roebuck catalogue and the occasional edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica—both printed in the same plant. The former is pure advertising, the latter pure journalism. What is usually referred to as journalism is the combination of journalism and advertising which constitutes the daily newspaper or popular magazine, i. e. "The Press."

That the press is misunderstood is not surprising. As the result of the enlightenment of the past few decades, intelligent people hope they are beginning to understand that everything is probably misunderstood. The remarks which follow offer a factor of correction to a variety of widely shared misconceptions concerning an institution with which everyone has daily contact.

We require, first, a perspective. There is a great temptation to feel that we are living in an age so utterly different from all that has gone before that it is absolutely inexplicable in terms of the past. It would be folly to resist this temptation. Truth is not so outraged when a barnyard is mistaken for a universe, as when a veritable universe of new forces is mistaken for a made-over barnyard. Looking at the immense globe which revolves slowly in the lobby of the *Daily News* (tabloid) building, Mr. Thornton Wilder remarked: "This is the first generation that can grasp the whole planet in its imagination at one time," adding: "It no longer seems very large to us." By this one true generalization we are seismically separated from all past. Other equally true and equally divisive generalizations could be made.

Ours must be Year One Perspective—Year One being somewhere between 1900 and 1930. That this Year One hypothesis is currently the butt of learned jest, I well realize. Since the 1929 panic, various old style financial writers have had no end of sly sport sticking pins into the New Era theory. Because we did not make 5,600,000 automobiles in 1930 as we did in 1929, little signficance is attached to the fact that we did make 3,500,000. If you will put five people into each of them—and five in a Ford two-seater would be more comfortable than one on a camel—and if you will drive each car 50,000 miles which each can go, only of course they won't, you will have accomplished one thousand billion miles of travel—one trillion miles, one thousand thousand million miles which, I challenge any statistician, is more travel than was accomplished in any one year by all the subjects of Caesar Augustus by all their means of locomotion put together, including their 160,000,000 feet. As to circulation, this is distinctly a New Era.

But even those who are intellectually and emotionally convinced of the general newness of this era, lose sight of the fundamental newness of the press. Gutenberg lived many years ago. Although some may be vaguely aware of Mergenthaler, who lived not so long ago, we do not associate with the press any great revolutionist such as Marconi, Edison, Wright, and certainly no great new principles such as those concerned with the transmission of electrical energy, or the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen. Even when we peer back a century or more we see nothing comparable to Mendel, bacteriology, the internal combustion engine. The *Saturday Evening Post* quite irrelevantly fastens our attention on Benjamin Franklin, but of course he was a totally uninspired journalist, a pigmy compared with George Horace Lorrimer.

Actually during the last fifty years there have been mechanical developments of the utmost importance. The Civil War was reported entirely without benefit of printed photographs—the half-tone dating to about 1880. I have referred to Mergenthaler, without whose type-setting machine the modern American newspaper could not have evolved. Color in large-scale printing is entirely new, so new that it is far from perfect. The man who prepared the first color advertisement for the inside of the *Saturday Evening Post* did so in 1915. And of course many things such as wireless and increased efficiency of cable have, it is not too much to say, revolutionized the character of the whole press.

But while many of these ingenious apparatuses are essential to the modern press, it is not in them that the modernity of the press is most startling. The fundamental newness of the press is most quickly expressed by saying that it has only recently become a business. That is to say, we have in a totally New Era, which in itself would imply a new press—we have in this new era a press which has newly become a business.

It is, as I shall show, fundamentally different from any other business, but it is nevertheless a business. For a century or more the press was roughly one per cent learning and literature and ninety-nine per cent patronage, blackmail, vituperation, knight-errantry, hacks, bums, pomposity, starved poets, statistics, adulation, fraud, idealism, politics, pieties. The press was animated by every motive, from the basest to the noblest, except the simple desire to discover and tell what happened. In the latter half of the last century the press began to look like business. The biggest advertisements were still apt to be three or four inches of almost illegible type, yet actually some papers began to make real money. But, only a decade or two ago, well after the great fortunes of Bennett, Pulitzer, Medill, Scripps, Northcliffe, Hearst, and many others had been wrested from it, the press was not regarded as a business to be taken too seriously. Whereas you might pay $8,000,000 or more for a tintack business that was making $1,000,000 a year, you would hesitate to pay three or four million for a newspaper that was making the same amount. In the case of small town papers, the physical equipment and the accessory job-printing business were still regarded as of more definite value than the apparent profit-making abilities of the paper.

* * *

Especially in the last decade has all this been changed. Big newspapers have actually been bought and sold for fairly big money. Even bigger money has been refused for other papers. Before the stock market crash, Mr. Ochs's New York *Times* was casually referred to as worth a hundred million dollars. Even now it is talked of as a forty-million-dollar paper. The Chicago *Tribune* may make eight million a year. Papers in towns of 50,000 or 100,000 population are valued at half a million, a million, two million—figures that would have appeared fantastic to their owners a mere decade ago.

The change resulted from many complex factors. But it was principally due to the fact that newspapers could make good and *regular* profits provided they satisfied enough readers. This sounds obvious in the extreme. However obvious, it was revolutionary, as are many of the great facts which make modern civilization. For the first time, it became possible for the press to make money simply by satisfying public taste. There are nobler motives, there are baser: here, at least, was an honest motive and it drove out the others. Crookedness remained and of course remains. Since the money comes only indirectly from the pleased public and directly from the advertiser, many publishers live principally to please the advertiser. But so tremendous has been the growth in advertising, and so intense has become the competition for public attention that a publisher who has got his public (including his public's confidence) can be sure of getting enough advertising. The adviser wants the eye of the public, not the ear of the editor.

Now there is a certain breed of professional culturist which I believe is to be found swarming upon lecture platforms, and which is continually making faces at the press. Many of this type purport to be themselves members of the Fourth Estate, and their claim cannot be denied since half the population of the country has at one time or another wielded that which is sometimes mightier and nearly always heavier than the sword. Your culturist derives exquisite satisfaction from believing that he has pronounced ultimate damnation on the press simply by saying that the press is big business. In spite of his specialized ignorance of the subject, your culturist has no difficulty in identifying big business with stupidity, crassness, insensitive efficiency and, to put not too fine a point upon it, prostitution. Big business, ergo the press, is crass. Big business, ergo the press, will do anything for profit. While this bad logic is not directly used, I believe you will find that it runs parallel with most of the deprecation to which the press is subject.

But even this is better than the persistence of habits of thoughts about the press which date, like a pony express, to its dim past and which totally ignore the fact that the press has become a business. You do not have to go outside the trade to find this persistence of unreality. You will find venerable publishers referring to Watterson, Greeley, Godkin, and even William Cullen Bryant as having, I quote, "built the solid structure of our nation's journalism." With all respect for these noble souls, I hope you will be convinced that Watterson, Greeley, Godkin, Bryant, etc., are scarcely more responsible for the architecture of the modern press than Adam and that they have considerably less claim to that distinction than Alexander Graham Bell, Henry Ford, John Wanamaker, Harry Selfridge, Phineas T. Barnum, N. W. Ayer, J. Walter Thompson, Arthur Brisbane, Claire Briggs, Rube Goldberg, Cyrus Curtis, Bruce Barton, or thousands of other miscellaneous characters.

Among the thousand and one misconceptions arising from this Greeley-Godkin habit of thought there is, for example, the idea that the journalist, without being a politician, is nevertheless a cross between a drunken bum and a statesman. If this is an insult to which the politician has become hardened, it is a surprise for which the average journalist is never quite prepared. There are, however, a number of select journalists who nourish the statesman fantasy and are continually embarrassing their intellectual inferiors by invoking the great Delane of the London *Times*, who apparently used to go about among hoop-skirts upsetting cabinets as he went, by means of thunder which he discreetly caused to reverberate within a horrified, if minute circle of readers, otherwise known as circulation. The past being the past, let us now say that the journalist as statesman and the barber as physician are roughly contemporaneous.

We have already begun to visualize the new press when we have resolved to get rid of our nineteenth century habits of thought in regard to it. To define the business in a more positive manner, let us first make a brief survey of its extent.

The continental United States consists of about 120,000,000 people, of whom about 90,000,000 can read. Between the time of Socrates and the time of Isaac Newton, all the people who ever lived who could have read even a tabloid newspaper in any language probably did not add up to 80,000,000. Which is to say that unless people go to school after they are dead, all the literate population of Heaven and Hell combined in the year 1700 would not constitute as great a newspaper market as exists this very day in this country.

Our living literate population is served by about 2,000 daily newspapers. That is considerably less than a few years ago, principally because those papers which are published at a profit seem, on the whole, to be about as good as those which are not, and the payment of newspaper deficits is becoming yearly less fashionable, possibly because they are not deductible from the income taxes of the rich and quixotic.

Of these 2,000, about 1,500 are evening papers. This is not because an afternoon paper best lends itself to the orderly presentation of news and philosophical comment thereon. Quite the contrary. There are more evening than morning papers because people do most of their reading in the evening, especially the housewife who, having put her children to bed, is then expected to consider with avidity the department store advertising in the evening paper. If you will remember this curious fact, I shall not have to repeat that the modern newspaper is not the ideal shadow of the Great God Editor. If the Great Editor had his way, the housewife would spend the early evening cleaning the house; she and the children would go to bed at 9 p. m., and after a refreshing sleep the housewife would devote the morning to the reading of a morning paper. And when you will get the wife to do that, you may expect the Great

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by Henry R. Luce

Editor to get up a newspaper the like of which no dream has ever compassed. Which is not to say that the present morning paper is in any sense an inducement to changing our habits of life.

Well, then, 90,000,000 people, 1,500 evening and 500 morning papers. Their grand total daily circulation is 44,000,000 which, allowing for some sharing, puts a newspaper in the hands of everyone. But the city with more than one morning and one evening newspaper is becoming rarer every day. Where a city has both morning and afternoon papers, there is a strong tendency to put them under the same roof, thus having in effect one paper with more or less continuous editions. That is thoroughly economical. Furthermore, it leaves no doubts in the advertiser's mind as to which paper he should use. It is this tendency which gives great point to the theory that newspapers are destined to become, are in fact now becoming, indistinguishable from such public utilities as light, heat, street cars, etc.

Our 90,000,000 American readers are given considerably more choice when it comes to magazines. Anybody can start a magazine and apparently many do. Not only is there the huge pile you see on the newsstands, but perhaps larger in aggregate circulation are those you don't see, alumni weeklies, lodge and Sunday School notes, trade papers, house organs, etc., representing every conceivable group or class of people or corporate or social institution. The *Saturday Evening Post* boasts the largest circulation —3,000,000. Which magazine has the smallest circulation it is impossible to say.

For present purposes, the magazine field narrows down to comprehensible limits. There are four recognizable types besides the private or house organ. First, the magazines of more or less general circulation ranging from, say, *Spur*, to the *Saturday Evening Post*, each of which commands a public to interest advertisers to the extent of making the magazine a more or less profitable affair. In all the United States there are only five or six national weeklies which could be included in this category. There are perhaps twenty or thirty monthlies. Second, the vast number of specialized or trade papers all the way from *Chemical Engineering* to *Vogue*, most of which are profitable. Third, a number of miscellaneous magazines which are not profitable. Most of these are going through a period of decay prior to dissolution, such, for example, as the weaker radio magazines, which have outlived the enthusiasts' era. In this category are also to be found some of our most literary products and some journals which have a kind of intramural influence upon their own cultivated minority which is supposed, ultimately, to determine the course of the nation either to the left, right, or possibly even dead center. The fourth and final category I can most briefly describe as junk. By this I do not mean to imply that the other categories are junkless. Far from it. But those in this last category are junk from every point of view. Carrying no advertising they are junk from the manufacturers point of view, and of course both editor and reader know them to be junk—I mean the endless pile of sex story, detective story, cowboy and gangster story, etc., etc.

Now the astounding thing is that all of this put together is *not* a notably big business. The entire amount spent on advertising in newspapers and magazines in the great expansive year of 1929 was little more than a billion dollars. So that the whole newspaper and magazine business is not more than a billion and a half dollars per year at the very outside. That is approximately equal to the gross business of the General Motors Company alone. The entire press of the country cost less than the gasoline used by this country last year. And if the cost of the press be equally divided between males and females, we find that the amount spent by females on cosmetics was larger than their share of the cost of the press, including all the advertising of all American business.

That the press does not add up to large dollar figures is even more astounding when we consider that it is fundamental to our whole industrial organization. It does not, like the vaster movie business, stand apart from our basic industrial developments. Quite the contrary. The press is warp and woof of our industrial development. The machine has one principal partner—advertising: mass-production being the achievement jointly of the machine and advertising. This is so generally understood that it needs no elaboration, but what is so easily forgotten is that the press includes nearly all advertising.

The press levies a small tax, direct or indirect, on nearly every other business, in return for which tax it makes every other business possible in its present dimensions. Yet so small is this tax that it is only about one-twelfth of our governmental expenditures, and the sum of it is less than many businesses which are far from fundamental. I once supposed that Camels or Lucky Strikes or Wrigley's chewing gum spent a large part of their gross proceeds on advertising. You can imagine my astonishment to learn that Mr. Wrigley spends only 5 per cent on advertising, and that about 6 per cent has been the average advertising expenditure of cigarette concerns. So that, once again, the groans and lamentations of Stuart Chase require a corrective. I once supposed that it was the press which was bringing death and destruction to our forests. But I find that this, too, is only one of the cultivated superstitions about the press, for actually only 5 per cent of our annual cutting goes into paper.

But while the press has become, quite fundamentally, a business, and while its industrial importance as a business is out of all proportion to its size, it is also a peculiar business, so peculiar that it differs from all other businesses more than it resembles them.

Take, for example, the essential matter of ownership and control. Whereas stock ownership of, say, a steel or copper company or electric power and light concern is apt to be widely scattered, the ownership of a newspaper or magazine is very closely held. But exactly opposite is the case when you compare the control or guidance of the whole copper or electrical business with the control of the whole press. A few corporations actually dominated by a few men may be said to guide the copper or electrical manufacturing industry, whereas no group of corporations or men control or guide even a decent fraction of the press. The 2,000 newspapers of the country are owned by at least 1,000 and perhaps 1,500 absolutely independent corporations.

* * *

The contrast is even more striking when you consider banking control. You could not find a dozen financiers who between them have any appreciable influence upon one per cent of the press of the United States. This isn't to say that the press is purer or better because financiers do not control it. Just the opposite might well be the case. But it does illustrate graphically that the press is a business fundamentally different from nearly every other big business. Control of the press is an individual and scattered affair.

Quite aside from what may happen to the press in the future of the industrial era, it must be apparent that even an elementary knowledge of what it actually is today would preclude many of the absurd notions by which even such brilliant men as André Siegfried are misled and mislead others. For example, it is broadly true to say that since the press became a business it has become free and it is manifest nonsense to assert the contrary. The press is by no means without its scandals, but when it comes to controlling the press, the truth is that the job of controlling the production of motor cars or oil or wheat is child's play compared with a venture to control the production of news. Now, obviously I do not mean that all publishers are Unbound Prometheuses, noble, free, and brave. But I do mean that they are quite as free as college professors, and quite as brave as statesmen, or that at any rate there is nothing in the circumstances within which they operate to prevent them from so being. For, and this is essential to a true picture of the press, the press is managed by those who own it and, in many cases, by those who love it. If this be a condition tending toward virtue, which I believe it is, the press ranks very close in freedom to a university like Harvard or Yale and, I suspect, ranks higher than some state universities. We have to leave the business world to find a comparison. For in the larger aspects of business this condition of individual freedom is increasingly scarce. Among huge enterprises, Henry Ford is almost unique as an example of ownership-management. But Adolph Ochs could be paralleled on a smaller scale in nearly every newspaper and magazine. Even where you find the newspaper in a completely monopolistic position, the only paper in town, you find the owner-manager diligent and idealistic concerning its welfare and destiny.

It is not my intention to enumerate all the misconceptions regarding the press and check them with our view of the press as a new, peculiar, and particular kind of business. My object is simply to suggest that such a check should be made when any question concerning the press arises.

But let us take one more example, let us submit the question of leadership to this check. Take the issue of public control of public utilities. Despite various evidences of propaganda I think it must be recognized that the press has in no sense showed itself "power-controlled." Actually, more space has probably been given to "attacks" on public utilities than to their defense, for the simple reason that the "attacks" make more vociferous news. This in spite of the fact that public utilities are large advertisers whereas "radicals" or even "liberals" contribute not a dime to the press. On the other hand, most newspapers, while objecting to some public utility policies, are stoutly against anything approaching public ownership—for the simple reason that newspapers are themselves private businesses and consequently believe that the less business is interfered with, the better. Here I think the press appears in an admirable light. It is not heroic, it is not leading a great crusade to a Utopia of free gas or electricity. But it is giving every side a free hearing and insofar as it argues, is arguing for a golden mean between liberty and justice. But now take another kind of question, one which is perhaps even nearer to the lives of multitudes: birth control. I hazard the guess that 80 per cent and certainly 60 per cent of the circulation of the press is controlled by editors who believe that the dissemination of information concerning contraceptive practices should be permitted and even promoted in some wise and orderly fashion. But this is an opinion which the editors keep darkly shrouded—the expression of this opinion would offend, not too many advertisers, but too many readers; and of course laws governing birth control make little immediate difference to a newspaper's prosperity. Checked, then, with a true picture of the press as business, we find that the press is to a high degree honest, open, free but has quit being either apostle or public conscience exactly as it has quit being either mountebank or tool. It is free, but it is often very, very discreet. It must be judged, therefore, as a service of information and amusement, not as a philosopher.

Finally, a disclaimer is perhaps necessary. I have insisted that intelligent discussion of the modern press be based upon what it is rather than upon what it conceivably might be or might have been, but I am far from insisting that what is, is best. It is possible to view as a calamitous accident the fact that the dissemination of general news has been industrially coupled with the dissemination of advertising news. Divorced from advertising, journalism might by now have developed higher professional standards; it might have provided that moral leadership, the lack of which is so apparent in current civilization; its insight might have been keener, its wit sharper. But there is no evidence to support any such proposition. What has actually occurred can scarcely be imagined as occurring except as it did. And what has occurred is the creation of a press which in range and accuracy of news and in variety of entertainment was undreamed of thirty years ago.

* * *

The sale of the two New York Worlds *to the Scripps-Howard chain has provoked more discussion concerning the modern press than any event since the death of Frank Munsey. The* Saturday Review *is happy to publish the above essay because it gives, with graphic detail, a broad background to the subject. Henry R. Luce is Publisher-Editor of* Time *and of* Fortune, *both of which are radical and successful innovations in the publishing field. Mr. Luce's late partner, Briton Hadden, began work on the New York* World (*morning*) *in* 1921 *when that paper, under Herbert Swope, was journalistically as aggressive as any paper in the United States.*

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Books of Special Interest

A Voice from Yesterday

BLUE GHOST: A Study of Lafcadio Hearn. By JEAN TEMPLE. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 1931. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY WALCOTT BOYNTON

THIS book is frankly and profitably on the up side. Its writer thinks that Hearn's genius has been too little recognized and his social nonconformity, or, if you will, his moral lapses and digressions unduly stressed. And indeed when you have said that Hearn, half Greek, half Irish, had no puritan sense of sex morality and no racial inhibitions, you have accounted for that aspect of his life which has been most advertised. The author of the present study adds that Hearn's physical inferiority complex was a bar to normal relations with white women, and also that he preferred the dark, fruitlike beauty of the southern races. He himself was little and dark and half blind, by fate a hybrid, without kinsmen or country, unable to live or to think by any racial code or creed.

The established facts of Hearn's private life, then, are conceded as data of minor importance in this study. Our affair is with the artist and philosopher and mystic, not with the myopic little man who had a negro mistress in America and married a Japanese. In Japan he made his nearest approach to happiness, but even this experience was an episode rather than a finality. The little beauty-loving people, even his childlike mate had, he discovered, their limitations, above all a monotonous lack of occidental zest and passion. And there was other disappointment and disillusion there. At first he ardently strove to accept and assimilate the culture of the Orient. He found much there to his need, tried to make himself part of it, fancied for a time that he was succeeding. His failure to acquire the Japanese tongue, his admission that it could not be mastered by a Western alien, carried an implication which he long resisted. But the moment had to come when he realized failure. He could not be a Japanese, he could only be a naturalized subject of Japan, husband of a Japanese woman, father of some halfbreed children. All this he came to feel forlornly though not without relish of its irony.

Meanwhile he had been driven to strange compromises and subterfuges. For a while he gave himself to an eager attempt "to interpret Eastern thought in terms of Western science." He contrived a strange blend of Spencerian theory and Buddhist mysticism. His later writing dwells to the point of tedium on a favorite theory of self as an "aggregate of tendencies" derived from the past. He groped for the modern doctrine of the Unconscious, made much of dreams.

But the conviction that he could trace in every reaction layer after layer of an inherited memory becomes at times an obsession. Yet all in all, one can be glad in this age of behaviorism, when *everything* is attributed to individual experience, to have his dramatic and highly imaginative reminders that after all we do not come into the world as new creatures. Within the rodlike chromosomes of the cell are already contained the essential characteristics of being, and nervous structure is modified only very slowly and by infinitely small degrees.

In sum he was more mystic than philosopher, and more artist than either. His date is of more consequence than this biographer indicates. He belonged to the late 'eighties and the 'nineties, the art-for-art's-sake, beauty-cult period. Like many of his contemporaries, he pursued style as an end, philandered with the picturesque, found savor in the exotic. Literary hermit though he seemed, he was of his time, the time of Wilde and Beardsley and Stevenson. His pursuit of beauty led him into queer places. He was scrupulous in relation to his art. After the journalistic period, he wrote only when and as his genius moved him. But he did not scruple to take a post as lecturer on English literature in the University of Tokyo, and to write his friend Hendrick at the moment: "By the way, I *hate* English literature."

By that time, 1896, he hated English literature and had ceased to be happy in his pseudo-Japanese role. Now he abandoned theory and gave himself to mystical contemplation and to the rich sensuous images—inseparable from his visions. He peered into the distances of time and space for the "Blue Ghost," that dim presence of the Unseen and the Unknown which always haunted him. He yearned for a "spiritual Karma," symbolized by motherhood. The present study stresses and perhaps exaggerates the value of Hearn's philosophizing. He was but a wandering voice, homeless and plaintive. When all is said, this writer sums him up for most of us when she says: "It is a sort of spell that he casts,—woven by the wizardry of verbal music—in which we live for a time in a crepuscular region where fact and fancy are indistinguishably blended."

This is a thoughtful and thought-provoking study. Its style oddly alternates between the technical jargon of psychoanalysis and kindred branches of modern "science," and a sort of lyrical exuberance.

Recent American Diplomacy

FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1916: SUPPLEMENT. Washington: Government Printing Office. 1929. $2.

FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1918. The same. $1.75.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

WITH the first of the volumes mentioned above the record of the diplomatic activities of the United States concerning the World War is brought down to the end of 1916. The second volume constitues the official record of our diplomacy regarding matters not directly connected with the war to the end of 1918. Both volumes maintain the high standard which students of world affairs have come to expect from Dr. Tyler Dennett, Historical Adviser of the State Department, and Dr. Joseph V. Fuller, his assistant, who has had the immediate responsibility for these publications.

The first volume is, of course, by far the more interesting to the general reader. It contains the story of the fatal months during which this country felt itself being dragged into the world conflict and the efforts made by President Wilson to bring about peace in order that we might be spared the final plunge.

Germans and Allies alike were striving for victory with a desperation which made them reckless of our rights as neutrals. The British fleet repeatedly interfered with our merchant ships in a manner which brought vigorous protest from Washington, protests such as on previous occasions had brought us to the verge of war and on one occasion at least had taken us into war. All the possibilities of a similar dénoûement were there in 1916 and, if the Germans had played their hand with more restraint, the course of world history thereafter might have been altogether different.

But restraint was not an outstanding characteristic of the German military régime. While the British took American profits, the German submarines took their toll not only of profits but of American lives. They thus drew upon their own heads the national resentment which might otherwise have been reserved for Britain.

The result we know. But the efforts of Wilson and the indefatigable House to avoid that result make fascinating reading. The President sensed the fatal trend of events and sent House to Europe to plead with both sides on his behalf to put an end to the slaughter. House's method was to endeavor to get each side to state its war aims in the hope that such differences as might appear could be reconciled in the interests of peace. He and the President planned for a general conference out of which might come sufficient agreement to end military operations. The sanction for such a conference was to be found in the implied threat of the United States to enter the war on the more reasonable side.

Germany was eager enough because at the moment she had the military advantage, which would naturally weigh heavily in the negotiations. For the same reason the Allies were reluctant to enter a conference. It was useless for Wilson to call it unless he had an indication of the Allied terms in advance. And of course he could take no action in any case until after the election in November. By that time, the Germans were tired of waiting, and after their conquest of Rumania issued their own appeal for a peace parley. This could only mean a peace of victory for Germany. Wilson issued his own call a few days later, but the German note robbed it of any possibility of a favorable reception. The Allies had determined to fight it out.

This decision strengthened the position of those Germans who demanded a renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare. The decisions of February and April followed logically and the United States, after one of the most remarkable peace efforts in history, threw its military weight into the scale and decided the issue.

Prologue

Charles S. Brooks

Author of

ROUNDABOUT TO CANTERBURY, A THREAD OF ENGLISH ROAD, LIKE SUMMER'S CLOUD, etc.

With drawings by
JULIA McCUNE FLORY

LETTING memories repeat to him the story of his life, Charles S. Brooks "resolved to write of things that were his alone, the old house, the faces forever gone, the trial events that life's prologue offered him." This autobiographical story of his youth written with that rare charm and humor for which he is notable, will delight Mr. Brooks' wide audience. $3.00

God Sends Sunday

Arna Bontemps

LITTLE AUGIE was a jockey who won notoriety on the Negro sporting wheel of the nineties. For a celebrated figure like Little Augie, it was a great life. He was the rage of St. Louis in his boxed-back coat and candy-striped trousers. His brown girls wore huge diamonds. But even for this lucky boy there waited tragedy beneath the dim street lamps and in the gaudy little parlor where his mistress stayed. Arna Bontemps' first novel, marked by authentic, racy dialogue, treats a period and people hitherto untouched by fiction, and signalizes the advent of a Negro writer of the first rank. $2.00

HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY, NEW YORK

The Best Seller of 1931

Education of a Princess

by Marie, Grand Duchess of Russia

"... a compelling human document ... rich in unusual experience, and permeated by a candor and sincerity which is altogether charming."
—*N. Y. Times*

78th Thousand. *$5.00*

THE VIKING PRESS, NEW YORK

Samuel N. Harper,

just back from his fourteenth trip to Russia, reveals Soviet Russia's state of mind in

MAKING BOLSHEVIKS

$2.00 at all bookstores

The University of Chicago Press

LISA

By Edith Young

"Evanescent, elusive Lisa really is an enchanting creature, especially as she reveals herself in her diary. . . . Compact of beauty and sensitiveness and does interpret that rare type of passion that leaves the earth to find itself in the sky."—S. P. B. MAIS in the London *Daily Telegraph*.

MORROW, $2.00

GRAND-DUCHESS MARIE
and
PRINCESS RADZIWILL
did NOT like
UNDER 3 TSARS

THE MEMORIES OF ELIZABETH NARISHKIN-KURAKIN

Edited by René Fülöp-Miller

WE WOULDN'T EXPECT THEM TO! The book was published for the entertainment of American readers, not with an eye to pleasing Russian nobility. The author of "Rasputin" vouches for the importance and readability of these *unusual memoirs.* American critics are recommending it; American readers are enjoying it.

Illustrated, $3.50 **DUTTON**

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

IN regard to Ernest Hartsock, upon whose poetry and publishing we recently commented, we have received two communications which inform us that Mr. Hartsock died on December fourteenth last at the age of twenty-seven. Mr. Hartsock's magazine, *Bozart*, has since passed into the hands of Oglethorpe University, where the poet held the chair of Poetics. This magazine ranked well among the verse magazines of the country. His Bozart Press endeavored to put forth beautiful books of poetry at popular prices. Oglethorpe University is at Atlanta, Georgia, and those interested in the future of Mr. Hartsock's publishing work should communicate with the Oglethorpe University Press. As we have already said we regarded Mr. Hartsock's own poetry as of distinct promise. We quote a verse from a tribute to him by Mary Brent Whiteside in *The Emory Alumnus*; and we wish to thank both Mr. Earl Daniels of Colgate University and Mr. Herbert C. Lipscomb of Randolph-Macon Woman's College for bringing the above facts to our attention.

So, in your own immortal sunrise hour,
The crystal of your spirit shining through,
You leave a message greater than your art:
Nobler than song, that high unconquered heart
That is our living heritage from you.

An indubitably distinguished narrative poem is Theodore Morrison's "*The Serpent in the Cloud*," brought out by Houghton Mifflin. It deals with the fear of fate obsessing the sensitive spirit of a man who imagines that an inheritance of madness may blast the life of the woman he loves and his own. There proves to be no such inheritance, in the end. The example of a feeble-witted brother has caused his fear. But we are left with the impression of mere chance working so unaccountably in human life that Bruce's life and that of his eventual wife, Rose, might as easily have ended in tragedy as that of Bruce's father, who loses wife and son. Bruce is shown as a strong healthy man with certain ground for what at times, through the poem, seems a merely neurotic fear. A lightning-stricken tree upon the farm on which he lives is made the symbol to him of a horrid destiny which may possibly overtake him.

The description of the foredoomed struggle against the sower of life on the part of two healthy young people deeply in love, while the dying of Bruce's mother is overclouding their thoughts and the hidden possible menace that might crown their union is preying upon their minds,—this gives the poem its drama, its intensity. Entirely in blank verse it moves usually to supple rhythms, though occasionally the style becomes a trifle wooden. Mr. Morrison is, however, if not an utterly commanding wielder of words at least a careful and accomplished one. We can do no better, we think, then quote the passage which marks the crisis of the poem. Throughout, the love passages are handled with both strength and delicacy.

Who summons the lord of life to the piny pasture
Where the winds browse as once the numberless bison
Foraged over the prairie, their shoulders blacker than rainclouds
Moving in sombre herds across the sky?
The earth is at her time of fruits. The harvest
Stands mature in the fields. Quiescent now
The procreant forces of the world subside.
The young are suckled and weaned. The seeds await
Their season of death in the frozen crust of the ground.
But the thirst and the longing of men have no remission.
The vixen rests from her heat, and the red dog fox
Lopes the meadows at ease. The lord of life
Troubles them in their season and gives them peace.
But to men he gives no peace. He is walking now
In the night of the pines, darkness only less deep
Than the night of that womb whence the dust of seed is scattered.
Beyond all thought and sight and sense of the mind it lies,
Having alone the quality of darkness,
Seething with dust of seed. The sower walks invisible,
Scattering dust from his hand. The seed is sown.

Such writing is distinguished. It conveys emotion full of intuition. It delves at the roots of life. It is true that as we emerge from the illusion wrought by the melodiousness of the poem and by its general idyllic quality we begin rather to doubt the reality of its characters. There seems rather to have been a theme set with certain dream figures. This is the extraordinary difficulty confronting any poet who would set real life to blank verse. It is a difficulty that Robert Frost, at his best, has somehow surmounted. And Mr. Morrison has grappled with it notably. The character of Rose is, for instance, extraordinarily appealing, and in portraying her the poet seems to us to have evinced a sensitive understanding of feminine nature. The father also is memorable. The brother Stephen seems merely hearsay, someone in whom we actually only half believe. But the natural background is wholly convincing, vividly and freshly drawn. And if we seem hypercritical concerning a striking literary performance it is because we value the work sufficiently to fear to overpraise it. The workings of Bruce's mind are of real psychological interest. The structure of the poem is firm. There are passages of distinct originality. So much we will say and leave it to time to deliver greater encomium with the sifting of eventual seasons.

John Drinkwater's "*American Vignettes*," subtitled poems of the American Civil War, are also from Houghton Mifflin, the Riverside Press. The limited edition is a beautiful piece of book-making. The episodes recorded, says Mr. Drinkwater's note, "are founded on incidents and characters of the American Civil War that have come to the author's knowledge by personal narrative or acquaintance." The Contents has a Prelude and two sections, one entitled "The Blue," the other "The Gray." Of all the short rhymed poems included we like best the last which deals with the remarkable character of Uncle Wat, a very aged negro:

Uncle Wat came dressed
In his best.
With a silk top hat,
And a black frock coat,
And a red cravat
Pinned at his throat
With a skunk-tooth pin,
And a wide body belt
Of bright green felt
Studded with beads and clippings of tin
And an ink-pot lid stuck round about
With tags of wool and a chain of dimes,
And a picture of Gaby Delys cut out
From the New York Sunday Times.

Uncle Wat had lived through it all. He discoursed till late of the Civil War.

Mr. Drinkwater is one, as was proved in his play "Lincoln," who is unusually familiar for an Englishman with the Civil War epoch. And one of his particular gifts, as has been shown in his poems of English countryside characters, is that of singling out the peculiarly characteristic and portraying it. In these vignettes he writes of American characters almost entirely without an English accent. The bulk of the book is slight and the verse in it is some leagues from poetry, but it is interesting notebook material, really a series of anecdotes that revive a fascinating era.

"*Ten Poems*," by Kathleen Tankersley Young, privately printed in New York at the Parnassus Press, orders being taken for the book by the author at 113 East 9th Street, is a thin, large, paper book of some distinction. The sequence is evidently addressed to one particular person and there is genuine rhythm in the free verse:

Here in this brittle city we contend
With stone and star and voice,
Knowing that there is no returning
And that forever we shall wander
And the edges of self recede
Until the swift and errorless sleep begins.

So begins the third poem; the reminiscent passages of others have often clear and beguiling images. The book is like a lulled overture from which we can hardly tell what resources of music may be potential. To judge it simply by itself, it is minor poetry with hints here and there of stronger work that might emerge. Intensely personal, fundamentally reticent, it is chiefly undertone and we have but few clues to the episodes that evolved this graceful singing which leaves no very strong impress on the mind. No. 7, "Preface to a Letter" is perhaps the best poem as a whole. The writer has learned certain cadences, it would seem to us, from T. S. Eliot, but she is able to convey her own individual emotion. We shall watch for more of her work with interest.

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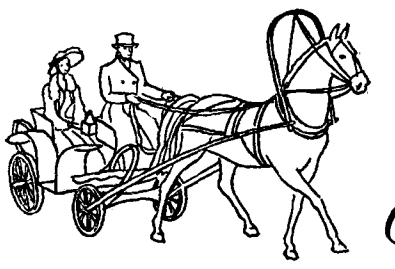

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A Letter from Italy

By Samuel Putnam

THE London representative of a New York publisher took occasion to interview the present writer the other day on the state of contemporary Italian literature. He was, naturally, interested from the publishing point of view; but he was an unusually intelligent agent for a perhaps more than usually intelligent house.

After remarking that modern Italian as a whole was practically a sealed literature for the outside world,—and this is especially true for America,—my interviewer went on to inquire if there was a literature of proportions in the peninsula; and however intensely interesting one may find current writing south of the Alps, there seemed to be no other reply than a negative. There is a strenuous effort to create a literature, yes,—much the same effort, to hoist one's self by the bootstraps, that is to be found in Fascist politics. There is a certain spirit of "We will create masterpieces"; but as my visitor astutely observed, this is more likely to produce bulk than it is to give birth to a great work of art.

Of all this, discerning Italians are themselves aware. Professor Camillo Pellizzi already has been quoted in these columns on the subject.

Looking at the thing from the publisher's point of view, the only likely or even possible best-seller that one can see is Bontempelli. There is one other book which, in all probability, would not sell, but which any publisher well might add to his "luxury list"; and that is Signor Leo Ferrero's "Leonardo, o Dell' Arte," which likewise has been mentioned here before.

Turning to the war book. Italy, it would seem, has not as yet produced her great war book, assuming that she is to produce one. She has produced many records of the struggle, in poetry and in creative prose, but no writer who stands out as do Remarque and Zweig in Germany, or Barbusse and Dorgelès in France. Perhaps, all in all, G. A. Borgese's "Rubè," which was published in English translation something like a decade ago, stands up as well as any work of its kind.

In Italian poetry, the war has left many stirring traces. There is Franco Ciarlantini, the soldier-poet, who began by publishing a book, "L'Anima del Soldato," on the psychology of the combatant which has been not unjustly compared to "Le Feu" and "Les Croix de Bois." This book, published in 1916, was followed by two poetical volumes of war impressions, "Angolomorto" (1917) and "Nuovi Appunti Lirici" (1918). One of the poems from the latter collection may be quoted. It is entitled

ASPHYXIA

Silent the village: one big trench.
Into my bones, into my heart, drop by drop,
creep the dark and the cold.
Women, run to your doors, do not be afraid!
I would know if I am alive, or if I am
dreaming, or if fate is playing me a
trick.
Give me at least a little light, O women!
I am going to sing a song that comes back
to me;
a man who sings in the night,
all alone,
is thinking of his mother or of his first love,
and he is well-intentioned.
Not a door opens,
not a window lights up.
And I cannot scream out my despair,
for the night, drop by drop descends,
ever darker and ever colder,
into my bones, into my heart,
and I am stifling.

Ciarlantini is not the only war poet. Nicola Moscardelli, in his "Tatuaggi" ("Tattooings"), published in 1916, has given us the impressions of a wounded man. And there is Piero Jahier's swinging "First Alpine March," full of a martial rhythm and the spirit of the mountaineer.

The Italian touch is something lighter and more delicate than either the Teutonic or the French. Indeed, one of the verse volumes that have been mentioned, or an anthology of war poems, might give the English reader a better conception of the influence of the war on Italian literature than would any prose work.

One of the latest war books is Giovanni Comisso's "Giorni di Guerra." Comisso is a comparatively young writer, and his volume is one of the most artistic that has come out of the conflict. He reminds one of Hemingway at times, but he is less theatric, more poetically impressionistic. His prose seems as careless as that of some of our own "advanced" young writers, but is really being very carefully manipulated, with an eye to effect; it is possessed of a certain modern fluid quality that is never permitted to degenerate into bad writing. Comisso is one of the most promising of the younger men; but the English reader—especially the American—might find his "War Days" to be lacking in that drama, and in that often melodramatic attitude toward the sordidness of the war, to which we have become accustomed. One of the stories from this volume, entitled "The Home-Coming" ("Ritorno a Casa"), was published, in the English translation of Samuel B. Beckett, in the recent Italian number of *This Quarter*.

Speaking of Mr. Hemingway, is it not possible that, after all, it is he who has written the Italian war novel?

Italy's spiritual-political problem in connection with the war was the same as our own, though given a different shading by her geographic propinquity to the theatre of events—namely, that of intervention or non-intervention. This theme will be found running through practically all of the war literature; it constitutes, it will be remembered, one of the motives in "Rubè."

As for the members of an older generation, that generation which is now in its forties, and which was actively in the lines in 1916, the war with them is fast becoming a memory, a memory softened by distance. It creeps out now and again, as in G. B. Angioletti's recently published collection of tales, "Il Buon Veliero"; but it will be found to have been reduced to the dimensions of an incident. It is an incident that has left a gap behind it, a gap of which these older writers appear to be only half-conscious. This is that "lost generation" of which Mr. Ford spoke some years ago.

As for the younger men, those who have come up since the war, and more or less within the past five years, they are, rather, concerned with rebuilding what is left of a war-shattered universe. The word "universe" is employed deliberately, for it is in terms of the universal, if only as a translation of the Fascist nationalistic impulse, that the young Italian of today is inclined to think. This is evidenced in such writers as Alberto Consiglio, Filippo Burzio, and others. The former's "Itinerario Romantico" attempts to come at the world and the problem of reconstruction through a criticism of that theory of romanticism and mysticism which has been elaborated by Ernest Seillière in France. Some of the things that Consiglio has to say concerning racial mysticisms and the mysticism of energy or of violence are extremely pertinent. In the course of his book, the author erects his own theory of *terrestrità*, and the "Apocalyptic Discourse" with which the little volume ends provides a lively spiritual portrait of a generation.

Burzio is occupied with the problem of the "Demiurge," which, high-sounding as it may seem, is so real and vital for the Italian of today; and his "Discorso sul Demiurgo" should be read by any one who would gain an insight into what is going on in the minds of the intellectuals under Signor Mussolini's régime.

A New Viennese Novelist

ZODIAK. By Walther Eidlitz. Vienna: Paul Zsolnay. 1930.

Reviewed by James F. Muirhead

WALTHER EIDLITZ of Vienna is a writer of novels and romances, whose works have for some time been arousing the interest of the press and public of Germany and Austria, winning the approval of such authorities as Thomas Mann, Arthur Schnitzler, Sigrid Undset, Romain Rolland, and Emil Ludwig. His previous publications have been somewhat slender volumes, but all have been marked by a poetic and historic imagination and by real fertility in invention.

"Zodiak" may be called his first full-sized novel. Its theme is the modern conflict between man and machinery, developed in the story of Gambo, a young Greek of Asia Minor, "evacuated" with the rest of his village to Athens, as a result of the last war between Greece and Turkey. The story of the march of the villagers to Smyrna, herded by Turkish soldiers, is told with great vividness. Gambo's grief at leaving his home is largely compensated by the thrill he feels at the prospect of visiting the Greek capital. On the way, however, he is nearly persuaded by the village priest to accompany him to Patmos and embrace the religious life. At Athens his patriotic and intellectual interest is eclipsed by his introduction to the wonders of modern machinery, which reveal to him a hitherto unsuspected bent and talent. Beginning humbly as an assistant in a garage, he makes himself an efficient chauffeur, and eventually becomes a member of the crew of an Air Line Express, serving Brindisi, Athens, and Constantinople. This leads to association with a rich American, whose mysterious business turns out to be the supplying of bombs and other baleful ammunition to European revolutionaries. Escaping from this at Cairo, he manages to smuggle himself on board the monster Russian airship *Kodak*, where he is finally accepted as a machinist. Gambo has, however, merely transferred himself from the frying pan to the fire, for the mission of the Kodak, organized by the League of the Godless Warriors, is nothing less than to prepare for the outbreak of a World Revolution by subjecting the whole world to a rain of "Red" leaflets. In the course of the voyage it reaches New York, where Gambo seizes his opportunity to leave it by parachute. He thus lands in America, his new Mecca, badly injured but still alive, while the airship explodes and comes down to earth a mass of ruins.

The book is, however, by no means the mere narrative of melodramatic adventure that this outline might suggest. Its psychological interest is at least as remarkable as its dramatic imagination. The development of Gambo's character is handled with great discrimination and acumen; and a charming though pathetic love story adds the element of personal romance. A hint is, however, given that a happier experience of this kind may await Gambo in the New World; and indeed the book seems to call for a sequel describing the future career of the very youthful hero. It is to be hoped that an English translation may be forthcoming.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

SHAKESPEARE'S PROBLEM COMEDIES. By WILLIAM WITHERLE LAWRENCE. Macmillan. 1931. $3.

During the last fifteen years or so students of Shakespeare have found it necessary and agreeable to give attention to Professor Lawrence's clean-cut statements of the effect of traditional plot outlines and character types upon Shakespeare's dramaturgy, especially upon the disputed group of plays known as "dark comedies." Professor Lawrence's attitude, which has points of affinity to those of Professor Stoll and Professor Schücking, is definite, consistent, and modern. It is historical rather than biographical, and in that as in many other respects voices a challenge to the nineteenth century critics, such as Dowden and Sidney Lee. That is, Mr. Lawrence, faced with an apparent irrationality in plot such as Posthumous's wager in "Cymbeline" or apparent aberrations of character like those of Bertram in "All's Well" or of Angelo in "Measure for Measure," seeks explanation not in the poet's mood or personal circumstances, but in the story patterns which he believes Shakespeare and his audiences accepted from their medieval ancestors and enjoyed without the realistic appraisal to which the modern reader subjects them.

A medievalist himself, Mr. Lawrence is able to present this thesis with much learning and persuasiveness. It has essential validity no doubt and is helpful as a corrective against the romantic folly of viewing Shakespeare *in vacuo*, beating luminous wings, sometimes in vain. Primarily the book is a study and defense of that portion of Shakespeare's mature work which is perhaps least generally admired today, "All's Well that Ends Well," "Troilus and Cressida," "Measure for Measure," and the Posthumous-Iachimo part of "Cymbeline." It gathers together and usefully expands what the author has said separately in various earlier essays published in learned places. An excellent new introductory chapter and a concluding sketch of "Later Shakespearean Comedy" round out the book.

THE ROAD TO CULTURE. By *Charles Gray Shaw*. $2.

WIT AND WISDOM OF MOROCCO. By *Edward Westermarck*. Liveright. $5.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE AS LITERATURE. By *Charles A. Dinsmore*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50.

THE EARLY ESSAYS AND ROMANCES OF SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE. Edited by *C. C. Moore Smith*. Oxford University Press.

FINDING LITERATURE ON THE TEXAS PLAINS. By *John William Rogers* and *J. Frank Dobie*. Dallas: Southwest Press.

Fiction

STORIES WITHOUT WOMEN. By DONN BYRNE. Century. 1931. $2.

The many admirers of the late Donn Byrne will be glad to learn that his first published collection of stories, "Stories without Women," first published sixteen years ago and long unobtainable, has just been reissued. It is surprising, considering the author's popularity, that this book should have been allowed to remain so long out of print, for it deserves a place, at least, among the better half of his work. It is made up, as may be guessed, of tales of boxing, of the late war, of the Foreign Legion (comparatively unknown in 1916), of the New York underworld, and similar adventurous settings, and contains, along with a few conventional stories, a number of excellent ones. The author's style is in this book not so hauntingly mellifluous as it became in "Messer Marco Polo," but it must not be thought that this is merely a collection of exciting adventures and nothing more. In one or two of the stories, notably "The Wake," Byrne shows all his power of evoking atmosphere. And in this book there is nearly always present a grimness which is always in evidence in his best work and which combined with his romanticism to produce what is probably his best work, "The Wind Bloweth," and then almost vanished (except for sporadic incidents) out of his writing, leaving "Destiny Bar" pretty and romanticized without it.

OLD SHIP. By LENNOX KERR. Macmillan. 1931.

This novel scarcely fulfils the promise of its delightful title. It is a conventional story of a forecastle full of unfortunate sailors living in squalor, and a brute of a captain. It departs from the customary model, however, in portraying the softening of the captain's fibre as a result of the almost complete inactivity of the merchant skipper at sea. Hard Case Busby becomes a Nancy with a shelf full of cosmetic bottles in his cabin.

The author who obviously loves the sea, is one of those perverse sentimentalists who find their pleasure in making things out a little worse than they are. We find it difficult to believe than any ship's company was ever so hopeless as that which put to sea on the *Hillhouse*. The author knows his ship better than his human nature. One quickly gets the feel of the rusty old tramp, and conceives an affection for her too, notwithstanding the horrors that take place on board, but the actions of officers and men are bewilderingly capricious and hysterical. We always had the notion that sailors were rather steady fellows on the whole. Not this lot.

VENUS ON WHEELS. By MAURICE DEKOBRA. Macaulay. 1931. $2.

It is apparent that the potentialities for civilized farce were promising in this latest Dekobra novel, but the author has developed them with a touch so laborious and tiresome —the proverbial Gallic wit is here in evidence at its inane worst—that the entire book misses fire. The initial situation discloses a young Parisian wife of the upper bourgeoisie, estranged from her husband because of his infidelity. With the intention of reforming the happy outcast, she salvages a cocotte from a Montmartre dive, takes the girl into her own luxurious home, and proceeds to carry out the benevolent experiment with eventualities which are more surprising and exciting for the various characters concerned than they can possibly be for the reader. A considerable portion of the story is told in pseudo-cynical, worldly-wise dialogue, dimly ornamented with faded wisecracks on sex which are introduced with the probable intention of disguising the essential thinness and mediocrity of the story.

BEGGAR'S CHOICE. By *Patricia Wentworth*. Lippincott. $2.

WHITEY. By *Carroll* and *Garrett Graham*. Vanguard. $2.

LIFE AND LINGO. By *Marie MacKenzie* and *Trix MacKenzie*. Stratford. $2.50.

OFFER OF MARRIAGE. By *Berta Ruck*. Dodd, Mead. $2.

RATTLIN THE REEFER. By *Edward Howard*. Edited by *Captain Marryat*. Everyman's Library. 90 cents.

THE MYSTERIOUS CORPSE. By *Tiffany Thayer*. Fiction League.

THE LIGHT THAT NEVER WAS. By *Katherine Fullerton Gerould*. Scribners. $2.

A LADY QUITE LOST. By *Arthur Stringer*. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.

SPORTING YOUTH. By *McKinley Bryant*. King. $2.

History

A MODERN HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE, 1880-1922. By R. H. GRETTON. Dial. 1930. $5.

The publishers of this volume have placed students of contemporary England under a heavy sense of obligation. Here within the covers of a single modestly priced book are the eleven hundred odd pages which originally appeared in three volumes. The contents stand in no need of a reviewer's commendation. Mr. Gretton's history is not the sort that the scholar fifty years hence will write, but it has merits, which, one fears, will be lost by that time. The author has sacrificed any retrospective advantage that he might have possessed and has written of the events of each year as they appealed to living Englishmen. It is an image of the English people as they are reflected in the sedate pages of the *Times*, in that distorting but oddly revealing mirror *Punch*, in the plays that they see, and in the music halls that they crowd. The story proceeds as a chronicle, with the events of each year usually comprising a chapter. In 1909-1910, for example, Mr. Gretton deals successively with wireless telegraphy, a famous murder, the Poor Law Report, Labor Party developments, the naval race with Germany, the Cook-Peary controversy, flying machines, and motor cars. From such ill-assorted materials he has fashioned a work that for most readers will be worth several dozen neatly documented monographs. Any lack of unity in subject matter is more than balanced by the completeness of the picture and by the sense of reality which it conveys. It is a fascinating book, amorphous, to be sure, but no more so than is the period that it covers.

A HISTORY OF SOUTH AMERICA. By *Charles Edmond Akers*. Dutton. $5.

THE WORLD CRISES. By *Winston Churchill*. Scribners. One volume edition. $5.

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BY HERBERT READ

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Points of View

Mata Hari

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

My attention has been called to an article appearing in the *Mercure de France* under the title "A propos d'un Livre Américain sur Mata Hari," and a letter in the *Saturday Review* from M. Charles S. Heymans, and I would ask the courtesy of your columns to correct some of the more reckless assertions of the author.

At the outset M. Heymans accuses me of having borrowed the title of my book from a similar work of his own. May I point out to your readers that the title of my book was chosen at the suggestion of my publishers before any of us had so much as heard of M. Heymans's existence? The book was already in print and its serial publication arranged before M. Heymans's articles came to our attention.

Apart from matters of opinion, which I do not care to dispute with one so abounding in prejudice, there are questions of fact raised by M. Heymans which cannot be permitted to pass unchallenged. I know nothing of M. Heymans beyond the fact that he is of Dutch extraction but prefers to live in France, a wise decision with which few will quarrel. His origin may account for his excessive sensitiveness to my allusions to the Dutch people and their sympathies: it may have induced him to undertake the defense of Captain Rudolph McLeod. I have no personal acquaintance with Mata Hari's former husband and so was compelled to rely upon official police reports for my knowledge. When such remotely associated authorities as the French, English, and German secret police, all of whom had a good reason to be accurate, are in agreement and numerous independent witnesses support their opinion, I can see no reason why M. Heymans's isolated view should prevail.

M. Heymans attributes to M. Faust the origin of my knowledge of the supposed "Life" of Mata Hari. May I say that I have not even heard of M. Faust and his work? A copy of the book was offered me for sale, together with a bundle of Mata Hari's papers, while I was in Germany. Its authorship does not concern me. I am a soldier writing the life of a spy, not a bibliographer quibbling over title pages.

In his urgent desire to have himself recognized as the sole, unquestioned repository of the truth relating to Mata Hari, M. Heymans not only dismisses with a journalistic gesture of disdain the evidence of eyewitnesses like Major Massard and Sir Basil Thompson, but he proceeds to manufacture objects for his disapproval where he does not find them ready made. His inability to comprehend the simplest English is shown by his assertion that I described Marov (or Masloff, as he prefers) as "a well known resident of the city" (i. e., of Paris), when that description is most obviously applied to another character. However, his misconception aids his case, which satisfies M. Heymans.

I contend that Mata Hari's supposed oriental dancing was not based upon any knowledge of Indian dancing, but M. Heymans contrives to find in this indisputable fact a cause for malicious misrepresentation. Much of his surprise at what he finds in my book can only be attributed to his belief that what he does not know is unknowable. In all modesty I must confess that I was not the first to identify (even in print) Mata Hari's influential friend by whose innocent connivance the spy was able to correspond with her German employers on official notepaper.

Again, M. Heymans finds fault with me for alluding to the legend of Pierre de Mortissac. Why should it not be mentioned? Your critic says the legend comes from Spain and America, as though that were sufficient reason why it should be worthless. But let M. Heymans take the trouble to visit Berlin, and he will find that the legend flourishes there in a manner which will put its Spanish or American origin to shame. Or, let him read Bernsdorf's "Spionage" for a version which may be quite new to him. It may be a legend, but it is quite a good one and by no means sterile.

But M. Heymans's principal accusations against me relate to plagiarism. These he tries to make convincing by arranging in parallel columns passages which he accuses me of having borrowed without acknowledgment from other writers. Let me expose my authorities for the benefit of your readers and leave them to decide whether M. Heymans's charges are true.

First: M. Heymans quotes extracts from M. Gomez Carrillo's book and compares my renderings of the same incidents. It is now several years since I read M. Carrillo's book, and I certainly never made extracts from it. When I first had the idea of writing a life of the spy I consulted an old friend, M. Louis Muller, for aid in collecting material on Mata Hari's early life in Paris. I am now glad to have this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness to the veteran Rouen journalist for his assistance. It was he who furnished me with the very information which M. Heymans accuses me of having unceremoniously borrowed from M. Carrillo. The words quoted (except for the second paragraph) are taken from M. Muller's letters to me. That the one exception should bear a strong resemblance to M. Carrillon's words is not surprising. I am literally quoting Mata Hari's own words, and I see no reason why another writer should not do so if he chooses.

Second: Twice in my book I express my debt to M. Massard, as must all writers who deal with a certain phase of Mata Hari's career. I am only too glad to repeat it. What is truly surprising is that the two examples of similarity quoted by M. Heymans are figures of speech which are so obviously opposite that they must occur to anyone who describes the same incidents.

Third: I am accused of plagiarism from a book I have not read, Massard's "Les Espions à Paris." How then account for the similarity? I can again only reveal the source of my information and offer a suggestion. In 1919 I was privileged to see the written reports of a French secret agent who had been detailed to work upon the case of another Dutch spy, Hoegnagel. From these I made certain extracts, a few of which I published in my book. As M. Massard was in an official position which gave him access to these reports in the original, he probably did the same as I did, chose the more interesting passages for reproduction. I left the incident as far as possible in the words of the actor.

Fourth: M. Heymans concludes his parallel columns with a quotation from his own book which he alleges I borrowed. I repeat that my own book was in print before I heard of M. Heymans's work. I will add that the words to which he takes exception were in my original manuscript deposited with the publishers in April, 1929. To this day I have read nothing of either M. Heymans's book or the series of articles he published.

Finally, let me add that M. Heymans has made not the slightest effort to deal with the principal part of my book or to understand my point of view. I had no intention of producing a detailed portrait of Mata Hari the woman. Instead I have tried to sketch in bold outline the picture of the spy against the broad background of the enemy secret service. In order to make that picture complete it was necessary to consult with many allied agents and to include the results of their work. This part of the book (not the least important part in my eyes) is contemptuously dismissed by this fastidious critic as "des broderies diverses, des chevilles, et des remplissages." Those splendid men of France who shared the indiscriminate hazards of the allied secret service will be highly gratified to know that M. Heymans holds their labors in such slight esteem.

T. COULSON.

Delair, N. J.

Note on a Translation

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

In reviewing my translation of Faust, Professor Walz says, "She renders the sense correctly and is rarely caught napping as on page 51, 'The Silberbach into golden streams would flow,' where she curiously enough retains the German word Silberbach as though it were a proper name."

Perhaps a word upon this point would not be amiss.

Shortly after Todhunter's translation appeared in 1924, I called Professor Speck's attention to this line which for the first time to my knowledge had been rendered, "The Silberbach in golden streamlets flowing."

"Todhunter was a very careful scholar and he must have had some reason for this change," said Professor Speck, "perhaps there is a river of that name." We consulted a geography, found the Silberbach at Eger, and a footnote commenting upon the peculiarly silvery character of this stream. As Eger is in the vicinity of Karlsbad, we then looked up the synoptic "Faust" and discovered the scene in which this line occurs dated 1808; references to the year 1808 were next consulted. Commenting upon the year 1808, Bielschowsky says: "The year culminated in his long sojourn in Karlsbad . . . where pleasure in works, facility in production, and physical comfort kept him in the best of humor."

Taking into consideration the fact that Goethe's observations are not infrequently carried over into his poetic descriptions of nature, we felt justified in accepting Todhunter's use of Silberbach as denoting the river Goethe had in mind, whose silvery quality he must have often observed in his trips to the environs of Karlsbad.

Another interesting example has been brought forward by Wurkadinovic in his article, "Schauplatz der Novelle," in which he proves conclusively that Goethe had a definite Bohemian river in mind when he wrote, "In the beginning the road led up the river along a very narrow waterway only suitable to small boats; bye and bye this river, *retaining its original name*, is destined to enrich far away lands."

A small tributary of the Elbe bears a Bohemian name which means "the White River," and the derivation of the word Elbe has the identical meaning.

By solving this philological riddle, Wurkadinovic lends support to the use of Silberbach as a proper name, and he also gives us further insight into the manner in which Goethe utilized the impressions gathered during his many visits to Bohemia to point out definite geographic phenomena under the cover of generalization.

ALICE RAPHAEL.

New York City.

A Correction

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

As I hear that Mr. Mather is in the act of sailing for Europe, I am taking the liberty of writing to you, instead of to him, to say how much I appreciate his charming review of my book in your last number, and also to mention an error in fundamental facts, which he has interpreted, somewhat picturesquely.

Mr. Mather states that I was born in Avignon, and that my mother died there, and that the little "orphan" Cecilia was reclaimed by her mother's family.

The facts are that I was born in Philadelphia, and that my mother died there, never having visited her husband's country. My father lived for many years. I was their fourth child.

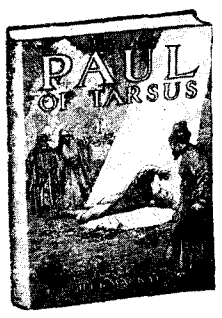
The narrative is short of this period, but I think it is clear that the scene is continuously American.

I am sorry to trouble you with these details, but I find that the lesser reviews copy the important ones, and I should be sorry to have a misinterpretation, caused perhaps by a lack of clarity on my part, circulate farther.

CECILIA BEAUX.

New York.

When Palgrave was compiling his "Golden Treasury," he submitted every poem in it, and many that were left out, to a jury consisting of George Miller and Thomas Woolner, the sculptor, with Tennyson, to whom the book is dedicated, as a kind of court of appeal. The original manuscript, containing all their comments, has now been presented to the British Museum by Miss Palgrave, the compiler's daughter.



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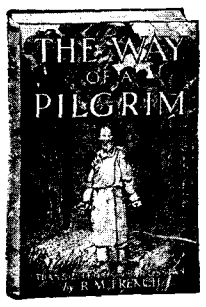
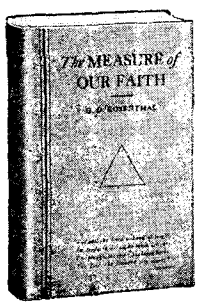


THE WAY OF A PILGRIM

Translated from the Russian by the Reverend R. M. French with a foreword by the Rt. Rev. George Craig Stewart, D.D., Bishop of Chicago

This was a lost book. The manuscript was discovered in the hands of a monk on Mount Athos. It reveals the heart of holy Russia, the simple goodness, the yearning mysticism and the artless piety that once thrived under the now submerged Russian church.

The book is the story of a Russian pilgrim. "He lives and moves," says Bishop Stewart, "in the quiet twilight of the Gospels, of the garden of Joseph at dawn. We see him. We know him (almost smell him) as he trudges along in rags, praying without ceasing. The book is quaint but not fantastic, pious but free of cant." Price—cloth, $1.50.



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Gossip Shop

By RACHEL FIELD

PICTURE Book Land may change with the changing fashions of decades, but however radical these transformations may be, we can be sure of one thing,—there will always be picture books about animals. The modern child may not play with dolls and blocks and beanbags as his elders did, but when it comes to pets the enthusiasm is the same. No wonder then that "Frawg," by Annie Vaughan Weaver (Stokes: $1.50), has already become a family favorite, for Frawg, who was an extremely droll piccaninny, and Buckeye, his yellow cur dog and inseparable companion, certainly were the life of the southern plantation which the author has made so vivid to all readers. It is an infectious little book, done with charm and humor and an unpretentiousness that is altogether delightful. Miss Weaver's own crude pictures add much to the individuality and flavor. Hugh Lofting agrees in all this and says so in his pleasant afterword to the book. And, by the way, afterwords seem much less objectionable than forewords. One is really less inclined to skip them.

Another nice book dog appears in "Aunt Brown's Birthday," by Elsa Beskow (Harper's: $2.50), in the person of Little Pet, the poodle who belonged to the three aunts who first made their appearance in America last year. This further addition to their adventures is as simple and satisfactory as its predecessor, with pictures of extraordinarily clear, lovely color, handled in the half realistic, half fairy tale way that little children especially like. Turning its bright pages is like an afternoon of listening to Humperdinck music.

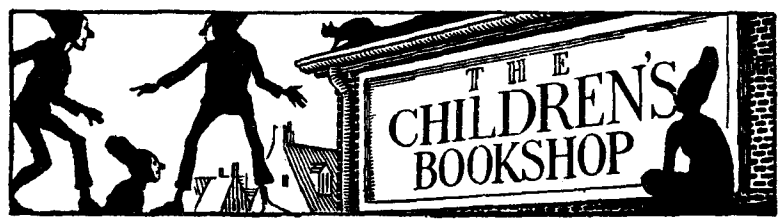
"A Good Little Dog," with text by Anne Stoddard and pictures by the Haders (Century Co.: $1.) is sure to be a favorite with very young readers. Bingo, the wire-haired hero, wins fame by rescuing a doll who has long been an object of jealousy, from a fire which threatens her. The pictures are realistically done and full of humor and spirit, although at times one wishes the color were better and the book less cheaply made.

So much for dogs,—"'Quack!' Said Jerusha" (Sears: $2), the tale in rhyme of an adventurous duck, is one of the best pieces of nonsense writing for children that has appeared in a good while. The verses are by Mildred Plew Merryman and if they could have been given such a format as that of "Mr. Tootleloo" of several seasons ago, the book might easily have been as popular. These illustrations are cheap and unimaginative with really dreadful, chromoesque color. A great pity when one considers the lack of first rate nonsense books to read aloud.

Lois Lenski's "Spinach Boy" (Stokes: $1.25) is already being hailed as a nursery necessity. It is dedicated to "Stephen and all other little spinach eaters," which would make it seem almost universal in appeal. Whether it will have a permanent effect upon the spinach market cannot, of course, be predicted, but Miss Lenski certainly knows how to write and draw entertainingly. Little Timothy Appleseed's adventures in search of his favorite vegetable are lively and simple, while the gayly scattered small pictures, the green covers, and print help to carry out the scheme. Another book, both written and illustrated by Miss Lenski, is "Two Brothers and Their Baby Sister" (Stokes: $1.50). This seemed a trifle less spontaneous than the other, but no doubt small children will not be too critical. It has a nice background of American small town life, in which sidewalks, baby carriages, clothes lines, and next door neighbors are all pleasantly intermingled.

Something rather unusual in the picture book line is "Mugel the Giant," a translation from the German of Paul Gartner, with magnificent colored pictures by Polf Winkler (Longman's, Green: $2). This tale of a king who plotted to chasten and bring his beautiful daughter to marry the right Prince, and of how a famous Giant assisted, is in the true folk tale tradition, but it is to the illustrations that the honors must go. These are strange and vigorous and in a style entirely their own. The color is original and beautifully reproduced. Another imported book is "In the Mouse's House" (Laidlaw), very German in feeling and with well reproduced colored illustrations by Mathilde Ritter, who seems to have a genius for depicting mouse life in all its phases.

"X Y Z," a new alphabet book arranged and pictured by Peter Gay (McGraw-Hill: $2), is planned to stimulate young readers into guessing the activities of the letter characters. For instance, C is a clown, O an organ man, and so on. A good idea and nice, bright color, though some of the characters seemed a trifle far fetched, like "e-Xplorer." Still X is hard to picture in an alphabet book, a fact which shouldn't be forgotten by reviewers.



Conducted by MARION PONSONBY

Reviews

THE CHARLEMONTE CREST. By AUGUSTA HUIELL SEAMAN. Illustrated by MANNING DEV. LEE. New York: Doubleday, Doran Co. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by MARION C. DODD

IN a period when grown-ups are so insistently asking for mystery stories, what wonder that the demand carries down a peg into younger groups and creates a special opening for clever juveniles of that type? Cheap and worthless material is unfortunately too often the result, since this sort of thing can be constructed in a perfectly mechanical way; and it is therefore a genuine pleasure to commend a book which takes advantage of this legitimate demand and yet at the same time offers excellent values of other kinds. "The Charlemonte Crest" is another in a numerous list of Augusta Seaman's mystery stories for girls, but the author here has branched out into a wider and a fascinating field, and at least one adult has already found much of keenest interest in these pages, apart from her wish to recommend them to younger readers than herself.

The West Indian islands have a very special charm of their own, as any visitor will always feel who has had even the too-short glimpses of a few of them permitted by the usual winter cruise. To any who can consider them separately as well as collectively this fascination becomes constantly more individualized as one goes further. In Haiti, the scene of this story, we have one of the most diversified and romantic of them all from a historic point of view, and one of the least known beyond superficial glimpses. By most cleverly linking her present-day plot to an exciting and romantic period in Haiti's troubled history, Mrs. Seaman unrolls much of one important historic episode before us without at all delaying the progress of a story of two American families, which we guarantee to be an absorbing and unusual one. The portrayal of a background of native life, with its strange intermingling of African superstition with French influence and French aristocratic tradition is also very well done, again being closely linked to the plot so that its interest is direct and immediate. In every way girls up to the older 'teens will be delighted with this book and fortunate to have it put into their hands. Boys, too, though none of their own kind appear in the story, will be unlikely to skip any part of it.

CANARY VILLAGE. By GRACE B. GAWTHORPE. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1930. $1.

WILD FOLK: Stories of Field and Forest. By ALLEN CHAFFEE. Boston: Milton Bradley Company. 1941. $1.75.

BIG BROTHER, the Story of a Trick Bear. By CLARENCE HAWKES. Milton Bradley Company. 1930. $1.50.

Reviewed by TOWNSEND SCUDDER

BIRDS, bears, and other beasts, their friends and enemies both human and animal, play their parts in these three books. "Canary Village" tells the story of a type of bird store which is, alas, fast disappearing in these days when gigantic department stores in their basement pet shops sell canaries with all the impersonal efficiency which marks the transfer of a strip of bird pattern cretonne on the dry-goods counters of the second floor. Gone is the small store in the bye street, gone its presiding genius, the comfortable little German, with shiny, out-at-elbows suit, who so lovingly watched over his charges, from "Big Bill," the toucan, to the rare crested canary,—idiotic bird looking for all the world like a thin bunch of celery. But in this little book, it all lives again. The theme is the old familiar ugly duckling one,—story of a dingy young nestling of a brood of six canaries, who develops, triumphantly, into the sweetest singer of the lot. There are, of course, convolutions and amplifications, what with a very parroty parrot, a mechanical-toy singing bird, a yellow-eyed cat. The citizens of Canary Village talk and indulge in human reasoning, but this is understandingly handled, and there is no real violation of bird nature. It makes a pretty little plot, surely interesting to a bird-loving child, and one can see it leading to a regular epidemic of attempted canary raising.

"Wild Folk" is by an old hand. It deals largely with that often hidden, unthought of world, the world of wild things which live close by our New England farms. Here also there is human thought and reasoning among the creatures, but somehow, though there is never the least doubt about the author's knowledge of beasts and birds, this introduces an often discordant note, jarring rather on the nerves of readers who know and love animals, and are conscious of a certain wilful, though doubtless unintentional, misrepresentation here. Truth and understanding are most certainly evident in almost every page, but the illusion of nature which the author succeeds so well in creating is marred by this unfortunate circumstance. Yet for most children except those rare few who hold the key to the genuine language of beasts and birds, these stories ought to be pleasing, and deserve to be liked.

One hesitates to praise a rather poorly written book. "Big Brother" is that. It is often illogical in plot; it is even at times dubious in its grammar. But these are faults visible to adult eyes, and there are compensations, virtues more apparent, one suspects, to children, which more than make amends. The story progresses and ends just as a child would want it to, with that nice justice and happy termination of fortune which adults know belong mostly to a never-never land, but which, to a child, seem eminently right and possible. "Big Brother" is an orphan bear cub who, by chance, falls into the kind hands of a little circus boy, and for a part of his existence leads the life of a circus performer,—"big brother" to his young master,—then escapes to live again in the woods as a bear should. "Big Brother" is a real bear, and mentally never steps out of his role to talk and walk like a man. There is an unconscious poetry to the brief portions of the book dealing with "Big Brother's" wild cubhood, and his return to freedom in the woods. And there is poetry and sincerity in the little boy's love for him while he lives a captive among men.

OLD MOTHER EARTH AND HER FAMILY. By MILTON GOLDSMITH. George Sully & Co. 1930. $2.

Reviewed by ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON

GEOGRAPHY, education, and the English language are three subjects with which most people mistakenly think themselves well acquainted. When a person who is poorly informed about all three attempts to write "a book of geography for young people," the results are deplorable. Mr. Milton Goldsmith, the author of "Old Mother Earth and Her Family" is to be pitied. He evidently has a keen sense of humor. He also knows how to make his book interesting, but a defective knowledge of English causes him to make errors like this on almost every page: "The sun is the earth's parent just like a mother is the parent of her children." Or again, "Iron and coal—is converted into steel." Such errors in English would not be so bad if the author were accurate in his geography. But here is an example of what he says: "When a thing is twirled swiftly, the momentum is called 'Centrifugal force' which simply means 'away from the center.'" Why does he say swiftly when any circular motion whatever is accompanied by a manifestation of centrifugal force? Why does he call momentum a force when it is nothing of the kind? And why does he combine this inaccuracy with bad pedagogy by using such words as momentum, mathematical calculations, and bagatelle in a book where the language purports to be such as a "child of ten can readily understand," and where it often falls to the level of a child of six?

While we merely pity the author of this book we greatly blame the publisher. Even the most careless publisher ought to have an editor who knows that such stuff as the following is sheer nonsense: "Some of the time the whole of the surface of the moon is lit up by the sun and then we have full moon." Who ever heard of both sides of a round object being lit at the same time by a sun far away on one side? The quotation goes on, "At other times, only a part is lit still there ever when it is invisible. But why haggle about details? Here comes the climax. The moon, we are told, is invisible for a whole week each month "because the earth prevents the rays of the sun from reaching the moon." In other words, Mr. Goldsmith and the editorial staff of George Sully and Company apparently are under the impression that once a month the earth eclipses the moon for a whole week.

It would be hard to say how many other equally crude and senseless statements have slipped by the editor. One more sample and we have done. At the end of the book we read that the original race that lived in Australia "was called the Aborigines." The author may not think that the aborigines are a tribe found only in Australia, but the child will. Then in this same paragraph the child will learn that the boomerang "will strike its prey and come back to the thrower." The fact of course is that the boomerang comes back only if it does *not* hit its prey. If it hits an animal or anything else its stops right there. Moreover, the boomerang that comes back was little more than a toy even in the days before the coming of the white men. A bigger, stronger one that does not come back was generally used for hunting.

GREEN ISLAND. By GEORGE BIDDLE. New York: Coward-McCann. 1930. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET MEAD
Author of "Coming of Age in Samoa."

"GREEN ISLAND" is presented to the reader as a book which has grown naturally out of the life of the artist. George Biddle records within its pages his joys and tribulations in a many months residence in a Tahitian village. This account of finding a house, acquiring first one and then two more native children as house servants and companions, of fishing, feasting, and a final climax of a dangerous expedition around a surf washed point is convincing enough and often amusing, especially to one who has tried to captain just such a household of South Sea children. The illustrations, also by the author, are far less satisfactory. It seems difficult to find any rationale to explain why the most beautiful people of the Pacific should have been presented in a bizarre style for which one can find the best parallels in the Chinese drawings of the fate of the Damned, why the graceful Tahitians should be portrayed as looking like scurvy-ridden ape men.

The author is sometimes quite successful in translating the mood of the island people into words as, after completing his house, "they went to sleep for a day or two on their sunny verandahs or in the shade of the tufted palms": or "I found it convenient to have no windows at all in the bed room. On the Island windows are made to look into a house, not as with us to look out of." He often makes a definite effort to give a vivid picture, as ". . . the alligator pear, whose fruit tastes like cream cheese and melts in your mouth like butter," or "a breadfruit looks much like a mock orange and when it is cooked tastes like a hot biscuit." But all this well-intentioned translation of island scenery is rendered nugatory by the weird, and unattractive pictures many of which look like prenatal caricatures.

The illustrations alone would make the book inadvisable to give to children. But there are other difficulties. Although the author attempts to make concessions to children and occasionally clutters up his paragraphs with words like "gooey" and expressions like "I squeezed myself in happiness," the book, although mainly about children, makes points for adults and more often than not in a vocabulary which children would find it hard to follow. Furthermore, he presents not a picture of a primitive South Sea island, but a picture filled with sardine cans, harmonicas, church going, an imported monkey, and rum. South Seas islands gone to seed are a sufficiently confusing and depressing spectacle to the adult observer and it seems unnecessary that a child's first impressions should be so mixed and unsatisfactory. Although it would be pleasant to have a book about the South Seas for young children, "Green Island" does not fill this need, and parents will be wise to defer the South Seas until their children are old enough for Melville and Stevenson. The book contains two or three South Sea legends but these can be found in greater number in Padraic Column's "Gateways of the Dawn."

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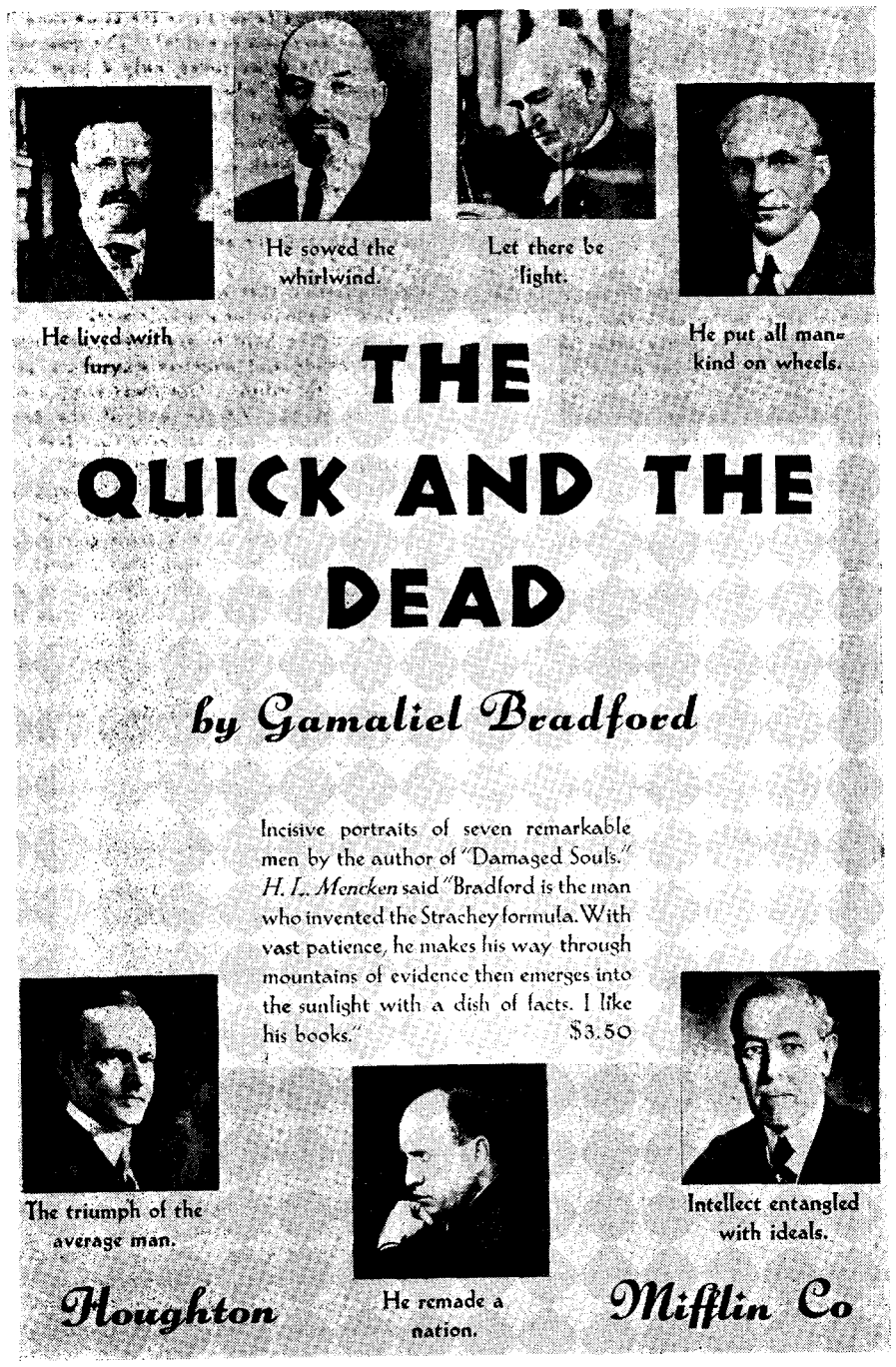
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The Reader's Guide

By MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review*

L. F., Floral Park, L. I., having read Joyce's "Ulysses," desires to compare impressions with those of critics who have made a study of the book.

THE latest of these studies to appear is "James Joyce's Ulysses," by Stuart Gilbert (Knopf); it is also the longest and most attentive to detail, amounting indeed to a key to the work. Rebecca West's "The Strange Case of James Joyce," which appeared in *The Bookman* in 1928, is included in her new "Ending in Earnest" (Doubleday). The illuminating study of "James Joyce: His First Forty Years," by Herbert Gordon (Viking), was published in 1924; the same house announces the impending publication in English of Alfred Döblin's "Alexanderplatz," which, it says, is compared by German critics to "Ulysses" favorably, as they say it is easier to read and to comprehend. But somehow the idea of a Berlin underworld novel at all like "Ulysses" makes my head swim.

J. H. G., New York, noticing references in this column to the magazine Life and Letters, *asks where it may be obtained in this country.* No doubt from bookshops selling transatlantic magazines—it is an English literary monthly edited by Desmond MacCarthy, with distinguished contributors—but the American representative is Mrs. Mortimer Seabury, 83 Chestnut Street, Boston.

Two more additions have been made to the list of books on rural leadership. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 105 East 22nd Street, New York, issues a Guide to the Literature of Rural Life, a pamphlet with annotated titles, classified; Macmillan has published, in the "World To-day Bookshelf," a volume on "The Place of Agriculture in American Life," by Wilson Gee, which has a chapter on "The Farmer in Politics." This has also a section on Farm Relief that will make it clear to city folks.

Mrs. W. R. Okeson, Old Stone House, Old Zionsville, Pa., sends me the title and table of contents of a book whose date and circumstances she knows nothing about, save that on an inner page is 1834 in pencil. Being a helpless victim to the charm of old songs, I, too, would like to know anything any reader can tell about this "Collection of English Odes, Cantatas, Songs. Set to Music by Mr. Thomas Bowman, London. Printed by Wm. Smith at the Golden Bass in Middle Row, Holbourne" with a list of subscribers, many of Cambridge University. The music includes songs like "To Handel's Pleasing Notes (On a goldfinch flying out at a window while a lady was singing Dear Liberty)," several cantatas, and "Artaxerxes: a grand opera as performed at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden and Drury Lane, selected and composed for the voice and piano forte by Dr. Arne; a new edition with the tenor clef transposed," as well as much other music "as sung at" Vauxhall or Ranelagh.

THE Maine State Library has taken up the matter of camp names in a serious way, and offers the following outfit of Abnaki Indian Place Names Suitable for Camps. The Maine Indians were of this race, and these words are from various lists of Indian terms, most of them taken from Father Rasle's "Abnaki Dictionary."

Allagash—A bark camp.
Cooash—Pines.
Massabesec—Much Pond Place.
Massapesauka—Much Pond Place.
Megallaway—Birch Bark Region.
Millinocket—Lake with many islands in it.
Mitinicus—An island.
Mooseluck—A lake.
Nahumkeag (also Naumkeag)—A fishing place.
Narramissic—Hard to find.
Natuah—An intervale.
Neddock—Cleared place or clearing.
Nekewannock (or Newichwannock)—Come to my home (place).
Nequamkike—Water place.
Penapse—Stone or rock place.
Owassabegat—Clear Water.
Schoodic—Place where water rushes.
Sooneybec—Shady pond place.
Soubakouk—Salt Water.
Wesserkeag—Land of sights.
Wiscasset—The good man's residence.

B. W. W., Keego Harbor (if he had given me the state I would have replied by mail) already has Abbé Dimnet's "French Grammar Made Clear" and Cassell's "New French Dictionary," acting on this column's advice. Now he needs a first reader and a few general works for good measure.

THE "New French Reader" of Ford and Hick (Holt) has been adopted by an imposing number of colleges and received praise from distinguished sources. It stresses vocabulary, simplified so as to put good literary material within the reach of beginners. The "Progressive French Reader," of Galland and DuGord (Macmillan), is another practical book for beginners; opening with twenty sketches of family life in Paris and the country, it goes on to short stories from French literature and concludes with exercises in conversation and composition. If this were for a young beginner, I would say Perley's "Que Fait Gaston?" (Heath), for this amusing reader, built on the exploits of an amusing small boy, is based on the sound pedagogical principle that one remembers what one observes with sharpened interest, and that the pleasurable shock of laughter impresses an observation on the mind. "Mon cher Tommy," by Marcel Prevost (Holt), is a study of the changes made by the war in the life and outlook of a girl of the French nobility; it is being much used in schools for practical instruction in current French. In my "Books as Windows" (Stokes) is a chapter on getting the knack of reading a foreign language—in this case French—that has made some Americans set their school language study to work for the enlivenment of their later years; I know because they have sent me reports of progress.

There was recently produced at the Cambridge Festival Theatre in England "The Famous History of King Henry the Eighth, a masque in the modern manner, using the text attributed to William Shakespeare and others." The costume and make-up were those of playing cards; characters like Norfolk, Lord Abergavenny, and first and second gentlemen, being unimportant puppets, were so represented by cardboard models, and their lines spoken from the side of the stage, and all the Court entrances were danced.

...."that the Saturday Review is Exciting"...

"Why you should let the haut monde, even the moyen monde, know how your paper is EXCITING," writes P. E. G. Quercus.

"I am but an old Danish-American bookhandler and I may not with unmannerly compliment embarrass you, but I think here is time, as the equinox again approach, for your redaction director apprise people how a good magazine is the SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE and how you are willing to accept a few more subscribers. In my career as second-handed bibliophile among the higher classes of urbane population I buy off overplus books and magazines which people of Park Avenue and Tudor Citadel have no rooms to keep. But I never find them disposing their old Saturday Reviews. Why? Your paper without any self aware attempt of smart-alec is one of how few, perhaps almost only, pellicule of civilization. You are modern without monkeyshine and pensive without pruritus, you have no cracks to grind. When I find the S. R. L. on the reading table I know I am dealing with people who are not sheepish and I must pay good price for the books I buy. You are in fact what one can only be in unawares, really chic.

So I think, dear sirs, you would let readers know how excellent journal you emit, for people have to be told. Especially this winter, without any holusbolus, you have remarkable things printed. How I was pleased by H. C. Tracy's review of that Sharp Becky, to wit Rebecca West, a woman that sparkles. Is that the same Mr. Henry C. Tracy who wrote (since 3 years) an Ach-admirable book called *English as Experience?* It is I trow. Recommend Mr. Tracy and wish more of him. He avails himself of mind and feeling. There was Claude Bowers' review of Masters' Lincoln, strong and thinkable. There was an Ach-glorious piece by Santayana in your paper since a few weeks; in an ideal world it would improve your subscribers by hundreds. Where do you find such a percipient about poetry as Mr. Benét, *Round About Parnassus?* as said one of your most forgotten writers (Thomas Fuller) He sees more than he is thanked for. I did like greatly Professor R. K. Root's essay on Modernized Chaucers. Why make Chaucer easy for people unworth him? His language is full of Dansk and I applaud Prof. Root's stand for the original. It is comical, Chaucer is getting fashionable among the youngest young! Divine they are, these youth, always reaching out for the brand new thing! I say, that poem by Edward Doro called *The Boar and Shibboleth* (since a few weeks) was a fine thing with vocational magic of a spring clearness. I should say much more; but the acorn is that for people not just hypnotized by hooey you are a paper etymologically exquisite. I consider there are probably 60,000 civilians (not more) in this country who would truly be trustworthy for your paper. Perhaps you have been sleeping on switches not to tell them so. Excuse my broken English, I broke it myself; I pick up much American argot by two young American college children who work in my shop.

P. E. G. QUERCUS,
(Second-handed bookhandler).

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AT the New York Public Library there is an exhibition of the Fifty Books selected by a jury of the American Institute of Graphic Arts from the product of American publishers in the calendar year 1930. The exhibition was opened on February 3, with an address by Mr. Will Bradley, whose name will be associated by all students of printing with the Wayside Press and Bradley, His Book. No more vigorous or original work was produced in America immediately after the so-called revival of printing than that which Mr. Bradley did. American printing has gained in grace and has in general returned to orthodox methods, but in the 'nineties and around the beginning of the century it was good form to be vigorous!

The reappearance of Mr. Bradley among the typographers, as a critic of this year's show, prompts me to a far look backward to the days when the Wayside Press and its contemporaries, incited and upheld by the example of the Kelmscott Press, were setting type for all book and commercial purposes as it had never been set before. There were not so many good type faces available then as there are today, but by a fresh and critical examination of the type founders' specimen books the enthusiasts of that time managed to get together a pretty good assortment of faces. With those faces they designed pages and set-ups which were frankly based on the vigor of the Kelmscott Press, yet which struck off in new lines. An examination of the printed product of the 'nineties will show a variety and a command of typographic style which leaves the present a little on the defensive!

The fact is that the academic style of Mr. Updike, the renaissance mode of Mr. Cleland, and the subtle delicacy of Mr. Rogers have tended to feminize American printing. The positive, downright character of Morris's printing was too much for most printers, just as the roughness of his paper was too much for De Vinne's fingers. The terrific shift from the namby-pamby printing of the mid-Victorian days went too far for most typographers. The reaction came slowly, but it came, and brought with it some queer effects. For one thing, it reinstated Bodoni in Anglo-Saxon countries—one of the unhappiest of its results. For Bodoni was *sui generis*, and only Mr. Cleland of modern typographers has been able to catch something of his spirit: almost all work done in Bodoni type is bad. And then came the resurrection of the types of the French renaissance, the thin, delicate, graceful letters which distinguish modern printing.

Probably the vogue of such ugly type as the so-called "fat faces" and "Ultra Bodoni" is due to a suspicion that our violent civilization does not get fitting representation in the delicate renaissance letters. Certainly the reappearance of the *sans-serif* letters (Kabel, Futura, etc.) is directly due to an effort toward letter forms more typically contemporaneous. But these types are not exactly vigorous—they are merely violent. Rather than the healthy energy of a creative people, they represent lawlessness, racketeering, corruption. And the fact that they are used alongside the delicate, wiry letters is but a reflection of the luxury and softness of the times.

None of these influences was at work in the typographers of the 'nineties. There was a so-called decadence—that, for instance of Beardsley—but it did not seriously effect typography. The printers of that time—the best of them—used solid, substantial type with great skill and positiveness. What they lacked in finesse they made up for in directness. Mr. Bradley's Wayside Press, the Heintzemann Press, the publishers Way & Williams and Stone & Kimball, and many others, set a standard tremendously good in its own day, and still good. It would be too much to say that a collection of the fifty distinguished books of, say, 1899 would outrank the present show, but I rather think it would give it a run for the money.

It may be that weariness beclouds judgment, but I am not so sure that we have got very far in the present exhibition. Certainly we have got only a short ways toward any fresh note. Mr. Douglass's "Book of Luke" is picked out as the example of a new touch. Let us pass over the fact that such a remark is applicable to only one book out of the fifty, although that is significant, and let us look at the book itself. The reason why it is distinguished is that it is set in a light *sans serif* letter, and that the decorations are exactly in harmony and accord with the type. It is a fine piece of work, finely conceived and executed. It is different, and it is highly successful. But where do we go from there? It stands alone. Everything else, and there are some very good things, is traditional—and not always very good tradition at that!

By traditional I do not mean "period" printing, so called. The 'nineties did far more of that. Even Mr. Updike did much in that line. But that he has got completely away from that imitative style, while maintaining a close connection with the printing of the past, is evident in his Book of Common Prayer, recently completed and shown in this exhibition. He has had the peculiar privilege of producing, or helping to produce, three monumental editions of that particular book. And nothing could more fully show the eclecticism of the modern printer than the De Vinne book of 1903, the Altar Book of 1906, and the Book of Common Prayer of 1930. The book shown here is essentially an excursion in type-setting: it is wholly devoid of the decorative elaborateness of the 1903 book, and it is worlds away from the Kelmscott-style of the Altar Book. The 1930 book is set in a seventeenth century roman of unique design: the pages are perhaps as readable, for a lectern book, as it would be possible to make them. The format is comfortable, and the use of large sizes of lower case letters makes for much distinction. Red ink is too freely used for best effect, but that is a liturgical and not a typographical exigency. It is not only a most distinguished piece of work, but it is in a most restrained and dignified manner.

It is not easy to pick out the high spots in the exhibition after Mr. Updike's *opus*. There seems to be no one item or series of items which call for especial mention. For while there are many well designed books, books worthy of attention by any book collector, none except Mr. Douglass's and Mr. Updike's would seem to show extraordinary opportunity or merit. But there are some very interesting books in the collection. Two at least—Mr. Updike's "Nailer Tom's Diary" and Mr. Adler's "Tom Sawyer," are set in double column.

To sum up the effect of the exhibition. These books represent a very high level of typographic achievement in general, but they hold no particular promise for the future. Eclecticism, democracy, and a vast typographic repertory have dulled the edge of genius, while opening the way to any printer who has the price of good type setting and presswork. I do not know that I would have it otherwise, but I must confess to a sense of surfeit. R.

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A Night in Kurdistan by JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH is suffering from rhapsodic reviews, but melancholy sales.

The reviews, in fact, are so rhapsodic and the sales so melancholy that your correspondents are going to break the house rules, first, by Harping on a Single Book several weeks in succession and, second, by quoting the critics at considerable length:

"JEAN-RICHARD BLOCH *has somehow found that point where reality is, and the story comes through it transmuted into a brilliance, a vibration, a sudden violent impression like that of lightning striking too near. Art? Genius? Any one who will use these words when speaking of* SALAMMBO *or of* APHRODITE *may certainly shout them aloud for* A NIGHT IN KURDISTAN. *Beneath his gorgeously enamelled Kurdistan, beneath the swift tale of bloody kisses, tortures and rapine; even beneath the characters which are both convincing and quite preposterous, there is true human experience, the vitality, precision, and freshness of word and phrasing are like music to the mind's ear.*"

This is one of the more restrained reviews, and is the work of ROSE WILDER LANE in *The New York Evening Telegram*. Equally ecstatic tributes have come from a veritable host of eminent English and continental critics, and from reviewers of *The New York Herald Tribune*, *The New York Sun*, and scores of other publications.

Withal, the sale of *A Night in Kurdistan* languishes. Even comments like this, from *The New York Herald Tribune*, fail to rouse the book sellers and the book-buyers from their stupor:

"A NIGHT IN KURDISTAN *is worth all the nights of* MORAND—*one is tempted to say, all the* THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS *of the Arabians—simply because in* BLOCH'S *work there are no literary tricks, no artifice. There is in* A NIGHT IN KURDISTAN *such a wealth of color that one thinks of* CEZANNE. *He* [BLOCH] *has a special gift or a conquering power to make old words vibrate with a new passion.*"

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WE wish to apologize to our readers for a miscue last week which made our final paragraph look intensely mysterious. The fact was that our copy was cut down at the printing-office to accommodate an advertisement at the foot of the page. So, for some inexplicable reason, our last paragraph was torn sobbing from its original context and tacked on to another paragraph with which it had nothing to do. What follows concerning foreign travel is what we originally wrote, the last paragraph of last week being its appendix. . . .

"We have been talking to somebody about the island of Maiorca, and maybe we shall go there, because they say you can live there for about fifteen hundred a year and for that you can have four servants. The man who had done this had also a wife and three children. But maybe we could dress some of the servants up. We wouldn't want four servants anyway, only one. So probably we could live there for a thousand a year. And if *The Saturday Review* will start now and give us a thousand a year to write them an article-a-week from Maiorca we will be on our way. Of course, if we can get more out of them than that we could take a lot of those interesting side-trips that make one's copy so much more sprightly. We are not thinking of *Chopin* and *Georges Sand*, either, when we say Maiorca. We are no Chopin, Heaven knows, and we don't know a Georges Sand. She would scare us if we did. We are thinking of having a good rest from all these distractions the great city offers. You can have a donkey-cart in Maiorca and can go in swimming. . . .

"And then an artist's wife told us about how you could live a winter in the Pyrenees for five hundred dollars. But we don't intend to come back for a while, so we should have to have a couple of years employment assured at—well, say fifteen hundred a year. This would insure the proper service to our clientele. It would keep us from worrying and so getting sick and scamping our work. We hate to have to scamp our work. We take every means to avoid it. Sometimes we even take every means to avoid doing the work at all, just in order not to scamp it. . . .

"We forgot to say that beside two years' salary assured at two thousand dollars a year, we should have to have our passage paid over on a good boat. It does no good to ship us on a boat where we are likely to get sea-sick and have a miserable time, because that just puts us in a bad frame of mind and is apt to make us surly. Beside this, all we wish are our income-taxes paid before we start. We don't like cheating the Government. We always say, How can a man be a good citizen if he cheats the Government? To this we have received many answers, and some of them are pretty darned original. . . ."

We forgot to say that we met *Isabel Paterson* at the eat for *Alan Villiers*, which we mentioned last week, and she pointed a finger at us and said we had been thinking over *John of Gaunt* as a theme for a poem or something. This was so true that we turned pale, shook in our shoes, and had to go and eat a lot of sandwiches to get back our nerve. Bookworm-turning has turned Mrs. Paterson into an absolute seer. But so far as we know she doesn't do card tricks. However, one other shot at our subconscious like that and we're ruined. We simply can't figure out how she knew it. Maybe we're looking gaunter—or something. . . .

We heard the monologues of *Cornelia Otis Skinner* the other night at the Cosmopolitan Club, and they were superb, particularly the one about the Philadelphia woman doing her little son's arithmetic example for him. Miss Skinner is not quite so good as *Ruth Draper*, but she is pretty darn good at that. . . .

Nunnally Johnson is a writer who left off being a newspaper-man in order to write short stories. He has made good at it. A number of his stories have appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and now comes a volume of them from Doubleday, Doran. Mr. Johnson is a Southerner, a Georgian, and he used to write a column called "The Wandering Reporter" for the old *New York Evening Post*. His book is called "There Ought to Be a Law, and Other Stories." . . .

One of the best of Johnson's stories, and a highly literary one, is "One Meets Such Interesting People." In fact, that yarn about Larry Laney who acquired a literary reputation in the tabloids ought to become a classic. It is fit to rank with the best Lardner. . . .

John Held Jr. has done another book, this time a novel, "Women Are Necessary"—sounding as if it were the obverse of the well-known *Hemingway* title, "Men without Women." The style has something in common with Hemingway's in that Mr. Held is extremely good at dialogue. His story is as old as the world of course,—sheer tragedy among perfectly common people, depicting one particular way that a woman becomes a prostitute. A great deal of the book is mere conversation. We read the opening paragraph of description and thought it quite bad. But the minute Mr. Held's characters began talking we were convinced. The story is a sad commentary on life but absolutely authentic. . . .

In "Innocence Abroad," *Emily Clark* has written for Knopf the tale of a spirited little Southern magazine, *The Reviewer*, and of its many friends among distinguished writers. These included *Cabell, Ellen Glasgow, Amélie Rives, Hergesheimer, Mencken, Van Vechten, Ernest Boyd, Elinor Wylie, Frances Newman, Julia Peterkin*, and *DuBose Heyward*. . . .

Florence Ryerson sends us from Beverley Hills, California, the following verse which we think pertinent:

TO A POPULAR AUTHOR

Listen, lady, if you must
Pack your tale so full of lust,
Full of sex, and girls betrayed,
So that ninety in the shade
Is its lowest temperature,
Could you not within your pages
Give us just one girl that's poor?
One girl who her thirst assuages
Not with champagne but with pure
Sparkling water, and who stages
Parties lacking in allure?
Briefly, in your coming tome
Couldn't just one *girl walk home?*

Robert P. Tristram Coffin, a well-known poet who is also Professor of English Literature at Wells College, Aurora, New York, took to biography when he wrote "Laud: Storm Center of Stuart England," and has now followed that book with one on "The Dukes of Buckingham," those evil geniuses of the Stuart era. Brentano's is the publisher of the volume. . . .

Bernard Fay's "Benjamin Franklin" has just come out in the French edition, presumably translated by Fay himself, through Calmann-Levy. The book should have a good success in France. . . .

"*Lucio*," the poet of the *Manchester Guardian*, has been exercising his talents on *Eugene O'Neill's* "Strange Interlude," which has just been produced in London. We quote from his "Strange Interludes":

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
For to-morrow will be quite the longest session of the year;
For I mustn't waste a moment of that happy, highbrow day,
For I must be off to the play, mother, I must be off to the play!

But expect me back for breakfast, for I get an hour off then,
So stay me, Ma, with ham and eggs about the hour of ten;
O have the rashers ready and the golden eggs deployed—
I shall need them rather badly after early morning Freud!

Robert Nathan has now added a ninth to his list of novels, "The Orchid" (Bobbs-Merrill). We can always recommend Robert Nathan's books. His is a delicate and fine artistry. He is unique among American novelists. Certain turns of phrase, certain deliciously grave observations glancing with mockery, are his alone. He is one of the few living American writers who writes exactly as he talks. In fact, we can think of only one other, *Dorothy Parker*. . . .

Wishing you well!

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